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AUTHORITY

ECCLESIASTICAL AND BIBLICAL

BY THE

REV. FRANCIS J. HALL, D.D.

PROFESSOR OF DOGMATIC THEOLOGY IN THE WESTERN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

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Dedicated

TO THE

SACRED MEMORY

OF THE

Rev. EDWARD BOUVERIE PUSEY, D.D.

WHO DID MUCH TO REVIVE BELIEF IN THE VALUE

OF AUTHORITY BOTH ECCLESIASTICAL

AND BIBLICAL

FOREWORD TO THE 1968 EDITION

This is the fifth reprint in the series of Doctor Hall's Dogmatic Theology.

The ten volume series often referred to as the "Anglican Summa of Doctrine" has been out of print for some years. However, there has been an insistent demand for its reprinting. Each volume in the series is complete in itself and the ten are designed to constitute a connected treatment of the entire range of Catholic Doctrine as it is preserved for us in the Anglican Communion.

The reprinting has been undertaken as a service to the Church by American Church Publications, a Committee of the American Church Union. The Doctrine Committee and governing Board of the American Church Union determined to reprint the series exactly as it was first written. Occasionally the reader will find sections where later research might dictate some alterations, but the quality of the original work and the fact that these changes would in any case be few, brought the Board to the decision to publish without alterations.

Thanks are expressed to the David McKay Company (successors to Messrs. Longmans, Green and Company, original publishers) for permission to reprint and to the Reverend Benjamin V. Lavey and the Reverend Robert F. Stub, who held the rights, titles and interest in the ten volumes upon receipt of same from Longmans, Green and Company and who assigned same to the American Church Union in order to facilitate publication.

(The Reverend Canon) Albert J. duBois

Executive Director

The American Church Union

15 April 1968

PREFACE

This is the second of a series of ten volumes which the writer hopes to produce:

I. Introduction — *Already Published.*
II. Authority, Ecclesiastical and Biblical.
III. The Divine Being and Attributes.
IV. The Trinity.
V. Creation and Man.
VI. The Incarnation.
VII. The Redemption and Exaltation of Christ.
VIII. The Church.
IX. The Sacraments.
X. Eschatology and Indexes.

The precise delimitation of these volumes is subject to future modification. Each volume will constitute a complete work in itself; but, if God permits their completion, they will together form a connected treatise of Dogmatic Theology. It is intended to issue them, should nothing prevent, at intervals of from twelve to eighteen months.

In relation to the subject-matter of this volume, three conflicting points of view are in evidence at the present moment. They are distinguished by a more or less exclusive and one-sided emphasis which they place severally on one or other of three factors of spiritual knowledge: (*a*) ecclesiastical authority; (*b*) biblical

authority; (*c*) reason. The result in each case is a disparagement and, at times, a sacrifice of the interests of the factors that are not emphasized.

There is an attempt made in this volume to do proportionate justice to all three of the factors which have been named, and to show that each is vital, along with supernatural grace and experience, to success in attaining a true knowledge of God and of spiritual verities. In brief, the writer sympathizes with the emphasis in each case, whether it is placed upon ecclesiastical authority, or upon biblical authority, or upon reason. He believes, however, that the three tendencies need to be taken up into a larger and richer conception of the process of spiritual knowledge and of the bases of certitude. A threefold cord is stronger than any one of its strands, and its strength lies in the fact that the several strands are *twined into one.*

The writer wishes to express his appreciation of the kindly tone of the reviewers of his *Introduction;* and his thanks to the Rev. Professor Stuart L. Tyson, of the Western Theological Seminary, for valuable assistance in reading the proofs of this volume.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

AUTHORITY IN GENERAL

PART I. *Nature, Forms and Bases*

	PAGE
§ 1. Aim in view. Four factors of spiritual knowledge	1
§ 2. Authority defined	2
§ 3. Forms of non-religious teaching authority	4
§ 4. Analogous forms in religion	5
§ 5. *Bases of authority:* (*a*) Social relations	7
§ 6. (*b*) Superior knowledge and expertness	8
§ 7. (*c*) Credentials from competent authority	10
§ 8. (*d*) Guidance and inspiration	11
§ 9. (*e*) Supernatural revelation	12

PART II. *Relation of Authority to Other Factors*

§ 10. Authority necessarily related to other factors	12
§ 11. Necessity of dependence upon reason	13
§ 12. Insufficiency of reason without authority	15
§ 13. *Functions of reason:* (*a*) To test the claim of authority	17
§ 14. (*b*) To verify authoritative teaching	19
§ 15. (*c*) To assimilate and apply such teaching	20
§ 16. Necessity and value of the factor of grace	22
§ 17. The factor of personal experience. *Præambula fidei*	25
§ 18. Verification and the limited sphere of direct verification	26
§ 19. Indirect verification	29

CHAPTER II

OBJECTIONS AND ARGUMENTS

PART I. *Objections*

PAGE

§ 1. Résumé 32
§ 2. *Objections considered:* (*a*) Alleged superfluity of authority and impossibility of supernatural revelation . . 32
§ 3. (*b*) Alleged paralyzing effect of authority on reason . 37
§ 4. (*c*) Alleged effect on immature minds. Bias . . . 39
§ 5. (*d*) Rational perception of truth said to be the real basis of knowledge 42
§ 6. (*e*) Alleged non-necessity of authoritative doctrine for true religion 47
§ 7. (*f*) Alleged fallibility of all authoritative teaching . . 48
§ 8. Reason not hampered by genuine infallibility of authoritative teaching 49

PART II. *Arguments for Authority*

§ 9. (*a*) Dependence upon authority inevitable in fact and universal 51
§ 10. (*b*) Necessary, if individual experience is to be transcended 53
§ 11. (*c*) Necessary for general progress 54
§ 12. (*d*) Necessary for individual participation in civilization 56
§ 13. Tests to be applied to the claims of authority . . . 57

CHAPTER III

ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITY

PART I. *Doctrinal Authority in General*

§ 1. Doctrinal authority divided into divine and human, or into intrinsic and derivative 63

PAGE

§ 2. Ecclesiastical and biblical authority, and their mutual relations 65
§ 3. Subordinate forms of derivative authority. . . . 69

PART II. *Grounds of Ecclesiastical Authority*

§ 4. Natural grounds 71
§ 5. Supernatural grounds summarized 74
§ 6. Objection that our method of argument is circular. . 75
§ 7. *Grounds in detail:* (*a*) The Lord's commission . . 78
§ 8. (*b*) The promised guidance of the Holy Spirit . . 79
§ 9. (*c*) The interior relation of the Body of Christ to Himself 80

PART III. *Ecclesiastical Infallibility*

§ 10. Its nature in general 82
§ 11. Is not intrinsic but derivative and limited in sphere . 85
§ 12. Resides in the corporate body 86
§ 13. Not in any particular agents, machinery or procedure 88
§ 14. Objections against the possibility of ecclesiastical infallibility 90
§ 15. Objections based on its alleged results 94
§ 16. Indefectibility of the Church 100

CHAPTER IV

THE DOGMATIC OFFICE

PART I. *Its Nature and History*

§ 1. Methods of ecclesiastical teaching. The nature and effect of catholic dogmas 102
§ 2. Origin of the creeds. What dogmas are ecumenical. 103
§ 3. The purpose of the Church's dogmatizing. Its consistency with real freedom of thought 107

PART II. *How Exercised*

PAGE

§ 4. By official agents, especially bishops, but in their representative capacity 109
§ 5. By positive definition of impugned certainties, designed to exclude heresy and guard tradition 111
§ 6. Catholic dogmas limited in range. Implicit and explicit faith 115
§ 7. The Church not silenced by her schisms 117

PART III. *Tradition*

§ 8. Tradition defined 118
§ 9. (*a*) Tradition by Scripture 119
§ 10. (*b*) Oral tradition. The part of episcopal sees . . 121
§ 11. (*c*) Crystallization of tradition in ecumenical documents 123
§ 12. (*d*) Patristic and later literature 124
§ 13. (*e*) Tradition by institutions, especially the Eucharist 126
§ 14. The manifoldness of tradition affords security . . . 128
§ 15. The purging of tradition 128

CHAPTER V

COUNCILS AND POPES

PART I. *General Councils*

§ 1. Résumé 131
§ 2. General Councils presumably authoritative, but require ratification 132
§ 3. They are not infallible in themselves 132
§ 4. May be repudiated lawfully by the Church. The distinction between General and Ecumenical Councils . 133
§ 5. Temporary doubt as to a Council's authority not fatal . 135
§ 6. The seven Ecumenical Councils and their decisions . 137

PART II. *Provincial Councils and Formularies*

PAGE
§ 7. The authority of Provincial Councils 138
§ 8. A survey of the more important ones. Their decisions 140
§ 9. The Anglican *Articles of Religion* 143
§ 10. *The Church Catechism* 148
§ 11. The twofold obligation of Anglicans in doctrine . . 149

PART III. *The Papal See*

§ 12. Our position defined 150
§ 13. Human causes of the rise of papal power in the Church 151
§ 14. The position of the Roman See in the Middle Ages providential 156
§ 15. The real issue 156
§ 16. *Reasons for rejecting the Vatican claims:* (*a*) They are non-primitive 158
§ 17. (*b*) They are unscriptural 160
§ 18. (*c*) They fail to work 164
§ 19. (*d*) They subvert the dogmatic office of the Church corporate 166
§ 20. The Roman argument largely *a priori* 167

CHAPTER VI

BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

PART I. *Inspiration*

§ 1. Résumé. Premises 172
§ 2. Diversity and unity of the Scriptures. The doctrine of inspiration summarized 173
§ 3. (*a*) The inspiration of the sacred writers 178
§ 4. (*b*) The inspiration of prophetic and apostolic messages 183

PAGE

§ 5. (*c*) The inspiration of the Bible *qua* Bible, or its divine authority 186
§ 6. The formal ground of belief in biblical inspiration, or the Church's authentication 191
§ 7. The canonical books 194
§ 8. The material grounds of belief in biblical inspiration . 197

PART II. *Theories of Inspiration*

§ 9. The methods of inspiration of the sacred writers to be ascertained by examining Scripture 201
§ 10. (*a*) The verbal or dictation theory 202
§ 11. (*b*) The theory that the *res et sententiæ* are alone inspired 205
§ 12. (*c*) The naturalistic theory; and the view that inspiration, even if supernatural, is not confined to biblical writers 206
§ 13. (*d*) The theory of selection 209
§ 14. (*e*) The dynamic theory 211
§ 15. The conclusion. Methods of inspiration too diverse to be defined by one *formula* 213

CHAPTER VII

CRITICISM AND INTERPRETATION

PART I. *Criticism*

§ 1. The value and presuppositions of criticism 215
§ 2. The task of criticism, and its subdivisions 217
§ 3. (*a*) Textual criticism 218
§ 4. (*b*) Literary criticism 221
§ 5. (*c*) Historical and scientific criticism 225
§ 6. Is inerrancy of the human writers essential to the inerrancy of the Bible *qua* Bible? 231
§ 7. (*d*) Doctrinal and moral criticism 236

PART II. *Interpretation*

PAGE

§ 8. Résumé 241
§ 9. Holy Scripture a sphere of induction 242
§ 10. *Presuppositions:* (*a*) The Church's faith sums up the fundamental meaning of Scripture as a whole . . 243
§ 11. (*b*) No Scripture contradicts another in its divine purport 246
§ 12. (*c*) The conscious meaning of the human writers is not necessarily the full meaning of Scripture. The task of "biblical theology" 247
§ 13. *Methods of interpretation:* (*a*) Literal or grammatical 249
§ 14. (*b*) Tropical or figurative 250
§ 15. (*c*) Mystical 251

CHAPTER VIII

THE RULE OF FAITH

PART I. *Exposition*

§ 1. The Rule stated. The Church teaches and defines, the Bible proves and illustrates 255
§ 2. The Vincentian rule; designed for scholars who seek to verify the catholicity of current doctrines 258
§ 3. The unscholarly have sufficient means of guidance to an orthodox faith 262
§ 4. The Church's living voice, and its manner of utterance 266

PART II. *Essentials and Non-Essentials*

§ 5. Reasons for regarding all the catholic faith as essential 269
§ 6. Degrees of centrality in revealed doctrine do not involve degrees in obligation to believe 269
§ 7. Obligatory doctrines classified according to the manner in which ecclesiastically imposed 272
§ 8. Non-obligatory pious opinions or *dubia* classified . . 274

CHAPTER IX

THE DEVELOPMENT OF DOCTRINE

PART I. *Legitimate Developments*

PAGE

§ 1. The sense in which catholic doctrine never changes, and the sense in which it develops 278
§ 2. (*a*) Development by analysis of doctrine 281
§ 3. (*b*) By elaboration of definitions and terminology to meet errors and new forms of thought 283
§ 4. (*c*) By scientific co-ordination of doctrines with each other and with other human knowledge 285
§ 5. (*d*) By consideration of the bearings of doctrines and their application to practical problems 286

PART II. *Illegitimate Developments*

§ 6. Necessity of distinguishing them 288
§ 7. *Illegitimate developments:* (*a*) Such as enlarge the substance of obligatory doctrine 288
§ 8. (*b*) Such as are based on isolated doctrines . . . 293
§ 9. (*c*) Such as result from unregulated attempts to formulate complete systems of doctrine 294
§ 10. (*d*) Such as modify the faith in order to harmonize it with scientific views 295
§ 11. The equipment necessary for a successful development of doctrine 299
§ 12. Three primary tests of developments 299

AUTHORITY, ECCLESIASTICAL AND BIBLICAL

CHAPTER I

AUTHORITY IN GENERAL

I. *Nature Forms and Bases*

§ 1. It is a habit of many to look upon authority and reason as in obvious opposition; and "the very statement that the rival and opponent of authority is reason seems to most persons equivalent to a declaration that the latter must be right, and the former in the wrong; while popular discussion and speculation have driven deep the general opinion that authority serves no other purpose in the economy of nature than to supply a refuge for all that is most bigoted and absurd." [1] In brief, authority is an intruder, and is to be shut out as making for unreason.

[1] Balfour, *Foundations of Belief*, pp. 203–204. An admirable statement of the attitude of many towards authority and dogma is given by Bishop J. L. Spalding, in *Means and Ends of Education*, pp. 159–164. This age boasts of its spirit of tolerance, but there is a notable exception. As Bishop Spalding says, "Everything may be tolerated, if only the spirit of dogmatism is away." The false presupposition involved is that dogma necessarily interferes with the right to seek truth without hindrance.

Among important recent attacks on the principle of authority in religion are Martineau's *Seat of Authority in Religion;* Aug. Sabatier's *Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit;* and

We hope that a study of the first two chapters of this volume will convince thoughtful readers that the supposed opposition between authority, rightly employed, and reason does not exist; but that the principle of authority is grounded in reason. It is, in brief, obedience to sound reason that causes us to depend upon authority in religion.

Four factors are involved in the knowledge of divine things. Two of these are subjective, reason and supernatural grace; and two of them are objective, external experience and authority.[1] Our dependence upon them is necessitated by the aim of attaining truth — not truth in the abstract, so much as truths that we need to know in order to live rightly, and to fulfil our chief end. It is essential, if we are to discover and assimilate such truths rightly, that each of the four factors we have mentioned should be given its due part in our acquisition of spiritual knowledge. The principles of due proportion and right relation, and the necessity of being dominated by the aim of truth-seeking, constitute fundamental presuppositions of this volume.

§ 2. The term authority is employed in two very distinct although related meanings. On the one hand

Réville's *Liberal Christianity*. V. H. Stanton's *Place of Authority in Matters of Religious Belief*, and T. B. Strong's *Authority in the Church*, are useful manuals of the right kind. The subject is discussed incidentally, or referred to, by almost every writer on religious topics. For a select bibliography on ecclesiastical authority, see below, p. 65, note 1.

For completeness' sake we shall be obliged to repeat in this volume some of the considerations contained in our *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*

[1] See *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. iv. § 1, pp. 84–87.

it is related to practice; and in that relation it signifies the right, whether based upon compact or upon deeper grounds, to regulate, within the sphere of its legitimacy, the conduct of those who are subject to it.

On the other hand, authority is related to the acquisition of truth; and in that relation it signifies an external source of information, ultimately personal, and concerned with matters that lie beyond the present observation and previous experience of those who depend upon it. To depend upon authority means to accept the testimony and teaching of others, at least for the time being, in matters not made known by our own previous experience and reason.[1]

Authoritative teachings may be derived immediately from tradition or from some documentary source. In this case the term authority is extended in application to such immediate source. But the ultimate source of authoritative teaching is personal, and external to those who depend upon it.[2]

[1] Stanton, *Place of Authority*, p. 12, says: "We may define 'Authority,' for the purposes of the present discussion, as that principle which is exhibited in all reasons for receiving or assenting to a truth, if such there be, which are external to the man himself, to his own observation, reasoning, or intuition, or which, if revealed internally, lie beyond the reach of his own verification." He means, of course, direct verification. See Fleming, *Vocab. of Philos.*, *s. v.* "Authority"; Murray, *New Eng. Dic.*, *s. v.* "Author" and "Authority."

[2] The word authority is sometimes used loosely in such phrases as "the authority of conscience" (Butler's *Sermons on Hum. Nature*), and "The authority of reason" (by many modern writers). But, strictly speaking, authority involves dependence upon authors, so to speak, other than ourselves. Conscience binds, for it is our best

It is inevitable that authority in practice should often be combined with teaching authority. This is so in educational authority, for education includes more than a mere imparting of knowledge. And knowledge that bears on practice cannot be imparted successfully, unless some degree of training is given in the exercises and practices which have to do with assimilation and practical application of what is imparted.[1]

§ 3. In ordinary branches of knowledge we depend upon various forms of authority. (*a*) Little children receive the first elements of knowledge very largely from their parents and elders. (*b*) At a slightly later stage they gain further knowledge from teachers at school. (*c*) And at school they come to depend upon the authority of text-books, wherein is summarized the knowledge which has been made available by the investigations and pronouncements of scientific scholars. The au-

judgment of right and wrong; and reason may not be violated in our conclusions; but they are both subjective. Authority exhibits itself to our minds and consciences externally and objectively.

[1] Salmon distinguishes between official authority to decide questions for practice, which depends upon office entirely; and authority grounded in superior knowledge, which is consulted on that ground. *Infallibility*, pp. 177–179. Also between the authority of a competent captain or physician, to whom we commit ourselves without learning his art; and that of a teacher over students who are seeking to become experts themselves. *Ibid.* pp. 51–52, 116. The authority of captains and physicians combines the theoretical and practical in a peculiarly obvious way. The Church possesses both the authority of a physician of souls, and that of a teacher of those who seek to become wise in spiritual things. The relation of authority to outward order, based on discipleship and representative, is discussed by T. B. Strong, *Authority*, ch. v.

thority of scientists continues to be deferred to in adult years.[1] (*d*) There is also the authority of common judgment concerning many things, both theoretical and practical, to which all wise men, to some extent at least, defer. This common judgment exhibits the generally accepted results of the accumulated experience of mankind, or of the race or races in whose civilization the individuals concerned participate.

Authority is found in eminent degree in the sphere of morality. The judgments of individual consciences are determined very largely by instruction received from parents and other teachers in childhood, and also by common judgment. This need not involve a failure of conscience to exercise its own judgment, or an acceptance of the moral judgments of external authority when inconsistent with the judgments of the individual's own conscience. The function of teaching authority in the moral sphere is educative, and has to do with enlightening, and to that extent with determining, the judgment of conscience itself. Authority is not entitled to displace the judgment of an individual conscience.[2]

§ 4. Unless the principles that hold good in the acquisition of truth in general are to be abandoned in religion, we should expect to find similar forms of authority in the sphere of divine truth.

(*a*) Thus in well-ordered circles the child depends

[1] On authority in science, see Stanton, *Place of Authority*, pp. 19–24.

[2] On authority in morality, see Stanton, *Place of Authority*, pp. 24–28.

upon catechetical instruction for its first knowledge of divine things — the instruction of parents, sponsors, and other appointed teachers.[1] (*b*) Such instruction is followed up by pastoral teaching, whether in catechetical form or from the pulpit.[2] (*c*) This teaching is determined and, if need be, corrected, by the teaching of the Church, under whose appointment and authority the pastor ministers; and ecclesiastical authority represents partly the common judgment of the faithful, but especially, the authority of divine revelation, the contents of which are committed to the Church for propagation and preservation from age to age. (*d*) But the teaching of the Church is corroborated by the Sacred Scriptures, which constitute the documentary evidence that the Church continues to teach in substance what was revealed to her in pentecostal days.

It is to be observed that, from the standpoint of historical Christianity, the teaching of divine truth depends ultimately for its earthly sanction upon the joint authority of the Church and the Bible, which in turn represents the authority of God Himself, who is the supreme source of authority. This agrees with what we have maintained, that authority is ultimately personal. It is also to be observed that ecclesiastical and biblical authority, unlike other forms of authority, are based upon supernatural sanctions.

[1] Deut. vi. 7; Prov. xxii. 6; Ephes. vi. 4. Our Lord submitted to receive the instruction of teachers in childhood. St. Luke ii. 46.

[2] See the exhortation to the Godfathers and Godmothers in the Office of Baptism — "Ye shall call upon him to hear sermons,"

§ 5. This brings us to the general subject of the bases of authority, or the grounds upon which we accept it.

(*a*) All authority, or rather our acceptance of it, is based upon social relations.[1] The teacher and the taught share in a common nature and in common interests, which require truthfulness and mutual trust for their advancement. In trusting others we trust those who possess our own capacity to master and communicate truth, and our own interest in truth.[2] The reason wherewith our teachers distinguish truth from error is essentially our own reason, and in accepting their witness we assume, whether consciously or no, that, if we had their experience, we should arrive at their conclusions. We indeed distinguish the opportunities, the capacity and the honesty of witnesses; but, on the whole, it is natural for us to assume that, in accepting the teaching of others, we are accepting what our own reason would confirm if we possessed their advantages.[3]

[1] Sabatier finds the roots of authority in the "organic conditions of the life of the species." *Religions of Authority*, p. xxi. Réville says that instruction and civilization are made possible by human solidarity. *Liberal Christianity*, pp. 99–103. Balfour treats this aspect of authority, as differentiating men from animals. *Foundations of Belief*, p. 238. Cf. Strong, *Authority*, pp. 3 *et seq.*; Illingworth, *Reason and Revel.*, pp. 208–213; Flint, *Agnosticism*, pp. 526–531. Sterrett, in *The Freedom of Authority*, exhibits the part of social heredity and transmission of accumulated belief and knowledge in the development of individuals.

[2] Stanton shows, *Authority*, pp. 53–66, that Christian consciousness makes its participants defer to common consent by reason of a common point of view, due to the social relations within the Church corporate. Cf. Strong, *Authority*, pp. 32–34.

[3] This is especially the case in matters of general consent. Cicero's

The same warrant holds good in dependence upon divine authority, whether immediate or derivative. We are made in the image of God, and the reason wherewith we attain to truth has its source and perfection in God Himself. We trust our own reason, in spite of its imperfection, and therefore trust that same reason in God, recognizing that its perfection in Him makes His knowledge more secure and trustworthy than ours. The fact is that the perfection of His wisdom, and His truthfulness, make the authority of God absolute. He can neither err nor lie; and when we know that any teaching is really divine we also know that it cannot be rejected without stultifying reason itself. Such teaching is determined by absolute reason and is the ultimate source of truth for us.[1]

§ 6 (*b*) The possession of superior information, within the sphere of its exercise, is a basis of authority. The simplest instances of this are found in the domain of fact. Even those who are less experienced than ourselves, generally speaking, are often in possession of knowledge concerning events which we cannot acquire at all except through their testimony. To reject this

remark is classic, "that opinion respecting which there is a general agreement in universal nature must infallibly be true." *De Natura Deorum*, I. xvii. Cf. Seneca, *Epis.* 117. On this subject see McLaren, *Cath. Dogma the Antidote of Doubt*, ch. xv.

[1] Trust in God is the presupposition of all other trust: *e.g.* in the rationality and uniformity of nature, and in our fellow men. Illingworth, *Reason and Revel.*, pp. 213–220. See Scudamore, *Office of the Intellect in Relig.*, pp. 123 *et seq.*, on the participation of human reason in the divine. He gives a valuable series of patristic citations.

testimony, when we have no just reason to suspect either the capacity of witnesses to observe and testify correctly, or their honesty, is not in accordance with sound reason and sober judgment. No historical science would be possible, if we rejected such authority generally. And even when we have reason to consider our authorities to be inaccurate in details, we often in some measure depend upon them, and that reasonably.[1]

But we depend upon authority in wider spheres of knowledge than of mere fact or event. We recognize a certain authority in those who are qualified by superior intelligence or by peculiar expertness in a given department of knowledge. We rightly depend upon their testimony in matters that involve inference and judgment as well as personal experience. Thus we often accept the judgment of a qualified historian, even when it goes counter in some respects to the testimony of contemporary witnesses; and the generalizations of natural scientists are accepted, even when the data upon which they are based are known to be far from sufficient to demonstrate the conclusions set forth.[2]

This holds good in the sphere of religious truth. We

[1] In judicial procedure juries are necessarily dependent upon the testimony offered; and that in spite both of the very unequal intelligence and capacity of witnesses, and the possibility that this testimony may cause them to inflict the death penalty on an innocent person.

[2] The evolutionary hypothesis now holds the field among physical scientists. But it is held only as capable of standing such tests as can be applied in the existing state of knowledge, — in short, as the best available working hypothesis. See James Sully, in *Encyc. Brit.* *s. v.* "Evolution," p. 770, second column.

not only accept the testimony of the chosen witnesses to the fact that our Lord rose again from the tomb on the third day, but we defer in spiritual things generally to the authority of those whom we recognize to be peculiarly expert in such matters. This deference reaches its climax when we have reason to believe that such persons are especially guided to speak rightly by God Himself. This is so because we can put no limit either to the knowledge or to the wisdom of God; and, as has been said, any teaching that is believed to be divine in its ultimate source is rightly accepted as having final authority.[1]

§ 7. (*c*) This suggests a third basis of authority — an exhibition by messengers of sufficient credentials from those whose authority is already recognized on other grounds. Such credentials justify our acceptance of the message thus accredited as coming from a trustworthy source. The immediate authority in this case is derivative, but not less real on that account. And messages may come not only through personal messengers, but also through letters or other literary *media*. Illustrations will occur to every reader within his own experience, and in every department of life. Peace between nations and other international interests hinge in many instances upon dependence on the derivative anthority of duly accredited ambassadors. Many

[1] The uncertainties that may attend our belief in the divine source of teaching ought not to alter this practical result. For surely we may not reasonably turn from what *seems* to have final authority to what seems to be erroneous, and neutrality in relation to truths that determine righteousness is equivalent to their rejection.

other important concerns would suffer constantly, if duly accredited messages were not depended upon habitually by those to whom they are sent.

The apostles were not only witnesses of the events of the Gospel narratives, but also messengers charged with teaching which they had received from a higher source. And their teaching was received on the authority of Him who sent them forth. This teaching was to be handed on through subsequent ages; and the Church with her ministry was appointed, among other reasons, in order that the original message might continue to be delivered to every generation.[1]

The contents of this message were also embodied, whether explicitly or implicitly, in Sacred Scriptures; and these Scriptures possess the same derivative authority of a message from God.[2]

§ 8. (*d*) A fourth basis of authority is guidance. It frequently occurs that the language of one who is known to be in constant contact with a superior, and under his influence, is accepted as reflecting the mind of his superior, and as having a certain authoritative value on that account. Thus a member of the American Cabinet is supposed, when speaking on questions of executive

[1] The personal agents through whom the apostolic message has been transmitted are indeed fallible. But divine faith rests upon divine veracity, even when we depend on fallible men for knowledge of what God has revealed. Palmer, *The Church*, Vol. II. pp. 80–82. It is also to be remembered that the Catholic Church, as we shall explain in chapter iii, enjoys supernatural protection in her teaching office; and the continued sameness of her primary teaching can be verified by the ancient documents of Holy Scripture.

[2] See ch. vi., below, on Biblical Authority.

policy, to represent the mind of the President; and a British privy councillor's utterances on the public rostrum are apt to be reckoned as inspired from headquarters.

Such authority is found both in Church and Scripture. The Church claims to be guided in her dogmatic teaching by the Holy Spirit, and it is an axiom of catholic theology that the Sacred Scriptures are the fruit of divine inspiration.[1]

§ 9. (*e*) Finally, supernatural revelation is the chief formal basis of our acceptance of authority in the sphere of divine truth. Whatever is taught by the Church as necessary to be believed for salvation, and confirmed by the Sacred Scriptures, is accepted because believed to have come from God Himself, and to have been made known by supernatural means.

We do not intend to imply that no revelation comes from God except by supernatural means; but simply this, that supernatural revelation has an articulate definiteness, and a special content and significance, which gives it a unique formal value and interpretive function in all our knowledge of divine truth.[2]

II. *Relation of Authority to Other Factors of Knowledge*

§ 10. Some of the most central and vital elements of spiritual knowledge cannot be known at all except

[1] The Church's guidance is considered below, in ch. iii. § 8; the inspiration of Scripture in ch. vi.

[2] We have treated of this in *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. ii., espec. Pt. II.

on the basis of authoritative teaching. And no progress of ours can emancipate us from dependence upon such teaching in these matters. But we shall err greatly, if we suppose that the promulgation of authoritative definitions of truth is sufficient of itself to secure in us the knowledge intended to be secured by such means. The authority must be accepted; but truth that is not assimilated by the mind remains as useless to us as if taught in an unknown language,[1] and truth that is not related, to some extent at least, to our reason and experience must remain absolutely unintelligible.[2]

It remains then that a proper dependence on authority includes the exercises of our rational faculties, which in divine things requires in turn the assistance of supernatural grace. Moreover, the truths of divine revelation are not isolated propositions, but are vitally related to life and to our general experience and knowledge. To understand the subject of authority, therefore, we have need to consider it in relation to reason, to supernatural grace, and to experience.

§ 11. The reader of the previous volume in this series will not suspect the writer of sacrificing the claims

[1] Some writers against ecclesiastical infallibility ignore this distinction, when they make the Church's claim to depend for its truth on her success in communicating orthodox belief to all — as if to teach infallibly meant to secure infallible disciples. We return to this. See ch. iii. § 14 (*c*).

[2] Martineau uses this fact to invalidate external authority in religion. So also Sabatier and Réville. They confuse the factor of teaching with that of perception of truth by the taught. See below, ch. ii. §§ 5, 6.

of reason in the sphere of spiritual things.[1] We were endowed with reason by God Himself, and we may be certain, therefore, that when our reason is exercised in accordance with its proper nature, the nature which God has given it, it is to be trusted within its sphere and capacity.

Moreover, we are made in the image of God; and we have abundant grounds for the conviction that our possession of reason is the property which likens us to our Creator.[2] In short, our reason is that in us which participates in the divine nature, in the divine reason. To mistrust reason, rightly exercised, is to weaken a primary basis of trust in God. We trust in Him because we find in Him the reason which we trust in ourselves, but without its finite limitations.[3]

Finally, the acceptance of any proposition whatsoever is an act of the reason. No doubt it is an act wherein our whole psychical nature is involved. Bare intellectuality cannot appropriate truth rightly in any

[1] See *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. iv. For further references showing that the appeal to spiritually enlightened reason is characteristic of Christianity, see the same chapter, note, on pp. 91, 92.

[2] See Bull's *Discourse on the Primitive State*, pp. 112–121; Liddon's *Some Elements*, p. 86; Thos. Strong's *Man. of Theol.*, pp. 238–240; Wilhelm and Scannell, *Manual*, Vol. I. pp. 392, 393. Biblical teaching is seen in Gen. i. 26, 27; ix. 6. Cf. Wisdom ii. 23. Balfour, *Foundations of Belief*, p. 238, points out that man is even more obviously distinguished from the brute by his recognition of authority than by his possession of rationality. The latter, we add, is characteristic, indeed, and makes possible the former. This appears in the fact that infants begin by yielding to power, and only learn to defer to authority as their rational capacity develops.

[3] Cf. 2 St. Pet. i. 4.

sphere. But the reason must be exercised, and a proposition seen to be irrational cannot be accepted or assimilated in any proper sense of terms.

It is to be insisted upon, therefore, that no authority is legitimate which is so related to our minds as to subvert, stultify, or bar the exercise of reason. The proper function of authority is indeed to emancipate reason, by affording trustworthy data for its consideration and secure premises for its deductions. Authoritative propositions do not constitute a vault within which reason is to be confined, but rather a foundation on which reason can build securely. The more firm and extended the foundation of assured truth is, the more glorious is the structure of sound logic and valid thought that can be superimposed. This is generally acknowledged in other spheres of reason than the spiritual.[1]

§ 12. Reason does not create truth, but weighs, assimilates, and applies the data which are objectively afforded for its consideration.[2] Two sources of its data may be distinguished: personal experience and authority. And since all truth is mutually related, the data thus derived are also related to each other and are more or less mutually interpretive.

Neither the data of personal experience nor those derived from authoritative sources are complete of

[1] St. John viii. 31, 32. "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." See Liddon, *Univ. Serms.*, 1st series, iv, pp. 67–68; Meyrick, *Is Dogma a Necessity?* pp. 153–156; Illingworth, *Reason and Revel.*, pp. 6, 7. Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, pp. 105–107.

[2] See Strong, *Authority*, pp. 25, 26.

themselves. If each individual were limited to the data of his personal experience, the functions of reason would be seriously limited, and permanent progress of the race would be impossible.[1] We see partial illustrations of the limitations of individual experience in "self-educated" men. The illustration is partial only, for even a self-educated man derives much knowledge from reading and from other avenues of authoritative teaching. But a man is called "self-educated" because he has not secured the help of those whose profession is to transmit correctly a wider knowledge than individual experience affords. We all recognize that such an one is at a disadvantage in the higher realms of thought; and a proof of this is found in the fact that, when he becomes an intellectual force in the community, he is generally considered to deserve especial praise for his achievement.

It is clear (*a*) that reason depends upon authority for knowledge of data lying beyond personal experience — data accumulated by the generations gone by, whether by natural experience or by supernatural revelation; (*b*) also, that no progress in knowledge is possible without dependence upon authority, beyond what can be made by an untutored innocent within the period of a lifetime; (*c*) it ought not to need proof, thirdly, that much of the knowledge gained through authority is essential to the practical welfare both of private individuals and of the community; (*d*) finally, it should be evident that mutual co-operation in the various practical concerns of

[1] See Strong, *Authority*, pp. 20, 21.

life, in short a working civilization, depends upon the general acceptance of principles and elements of knowledge which ordinary folk are unable to discover for themselves, but must accept on authority; and this holds good in religious co-operation or ecclesiastical organization.

§ 13. But, if reason has need of authority, so likewise does the validity and utility of authority depend upon reason. They cannot safely be divorced or set at war with each other, although their respective functions, objective and subjective, ought carefully to be distinguished and respected. Reason may be said to have three functions in relation to authority: (*a*) to justify our acceptance of authority; (*b*) to verify authoritative teaching, so far as it can be verified; (*c*) to assimilate and apply it.

(*d*) We do not depend upon authority against reason, but in accordance with reason. To accept any teaching whatever when it is seen to be contrary to sound reason is to sink below the human level, and indirectly to impugn reason at its divine source. Our dependence on authority must be reasonable, therefore, in order to be justifiable.[1] No doubt the number of

[1] Thorndike says, *Prins. of Christian Truth*, I. i. 5: "Christianity supposes sufficient reason to believe; but not standing upon evidence of the thing, but upon credit of report," etc. Cf. I. i. 7, 8; and McLaren, *Cath. Dogma*, p. 21. Moberly says, *Lux Mundi*, pp. 222, 223, "There is no proper antithesis between believing in deference to authority, and believing in deference to reason, unless it be understood that the authority believed in was accepted at first as authority *without reason*, or maintained in spite of the subsequent refusal of reason to give confirmatory witness to its assertions." See Stanton, *Place of Authority*, pp. 38–52.

those who can define intelligently and persuasively the reasons for their deference to authority is relatively small. But this does not show that dependence upon authority is irrational. It shows that the majority of men are more capable of acting rationally in the concrete than of showing that they have done so in the abstract. Men are guided to a large extent by implicit reason. Thus children act rationally when they depend upon the teaching of their elders, and none the less so because incapable of reasoning the matter out articulately.[1]

Yet the claim of any authority must be capable of standing the test of enlightened reason, whenever the time arrives or the conditions exist that call for such testing. And authority in religion is not exempt from this requirement. The New Testament itself tells us to test all things and to hold fast that which is good.[2] It is a primary obligation of creatures always to seek the truth; and this aim involves, sooner or later, that, according to our ability, we should test the credibility of authority, and satisfy ourselves that our acceptance of its teaching is helpful in arriving at truth.[3]

It is of course a fact that the credibility of an authority which is charged with spiritual teaching cannot be weighed rightly except by a spiritually enlightened judgment.[4] And it should be realized that the capac-

[1] Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, pp. 104, 105.

[2] 1 Thess. v. 21.

[3] Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, p. 107.

[4] See § 16 of this chapter. Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. v. § 13.

ity fully to test the claim of such authority is possessed only by those who have been built up spiritually on the basis of that very dependence on authority which is to be tested. But this means nothing more after all than the common-sense principle that everything is to be tested in its own manner; which includes putting practical hypotheses to the test of their working value. Those who try an authority-system practically are the ones who are able to test it most adequately and justly.[1]

§ 14. (*b*) A second function of reason in relation to authority is verification of the truth of its teaching, when and so far as verification is possible. As this subject will have to be considered in relation to the factor of experience,[2] we content ourselves here with insisting that we ought to verify revealed truth, so far as it can be verified, not only in order to fortify our own faith and enrich our knowledge of divine things, but also that we may afford to others reasons for the hope that is in us,[3] and persuade them, if possible, of divine truth. This pertains especially to apologetical theology. It is true that men cannot be convinced of Christian truth by mere reason.[4] But

[1] Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, pp. 109–111; showing that the objective criterion of knowledge is its working value: also pp. 157–159, in which the theological consensus of those who accept ecclesiastical authority in practice is contrasted with the dissidence elsewhere prevalent.

[2] See below, §§ 18, 19.

[3] 1 St. Pet. iii. 15.

[4] Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. v. §§ 15–16, on the process and laws of faith.

the exhibition of reasons that justify belief is none the less necessary, if those who are brought to believe by the Spirit are to acquire an intelligent faith — are to believe with their understanding as well as with their spirit.

§ 15. (*c*) Finally, it is a function of reason to assimilate and apply practically the teaching of authority. In the first place, the contents of such teaching have to be mastered exactly. No doubt we shall soon reach the limits of precise definition when dealing with divine mysteries. But we can and ought to form definite conceptions of so much as has been revealed to us, even though that may be less than we should like to know, and fragmentary.[1]

Then we need to analyze authoritative teaching, in order to realize as articulately as possible its full content and implications. The value of teaching is practically nullified when its recipients do not ponder over it and endeavour to enter upon all its meaning in detail.[2] Revealed truth may be likened to the heavenly

[1] What Liddon says with reference to Schleiermacher's view — "that religion has nothing to do with intellectual skill in projecting definitions, and that it is at the bottom a feeling of tranquil dependence upon some higher Power," — is relevant: *Divinity of our Lord*, pp. 3–5. "Religion, to support itself, must rest consciously on its object: the intellectual apprehension of that object as true is an integral element of religion. In other words, religion is practically inseparable from theology." A theology without definitions is an absurdity.

[2] The development of doctrine is the result of this and other exercises of reason on the contents of the original faith. See chap. ix. Pt. I.

bodies, which need to be studied often and laboriously by many experts before an astronomy worthy of the name can be developed. The words that were once for all uttered of old grow ever richer in meaning by means of the devout studies of successive generations of theologians; and their progress is due to a full exercise of reason, enlightened, of course, by grace.

Again, reason has to be exercised, if we are to appreciate the practical bearing and value of authoritative teaching. Knowledge which is purely abstract has but little value, save for the development of mental power. What inspires modern scientists is no mere intellectual curiosity, but at least an implicit realization that a wider knowledge of natural law means greater opportunity to subordinate natural forces to human uses. So it is with revealed truth. Enlightened reason is able to detect something richer and more valuable in dogmatic truth than a series of abstract propositions, imposed upon men to believe but unrelated to life. Divine truths have worth-values,[1] and

[1] The Ritschlian emphasis on "worth values" is not wholly false, but misdirected. What seems to have the worth-value of truth to a spiritually enlightened understanding acquires thereby a presumptive probability. Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, pp. 102–103, and note 1, p. 103; also p. 131, note 1, where further references are given.

Pragmatism, a very recent modification of the Ritschlian view, interprets each notion by tracing its practical consequences. "Theories become instruments, not answers to enigmas, in which we can rest." The truth of ideas is *identified with* their power to work, their practical worth-value. Truth "is *one species of good*, and not . . . a category distinct from good, and co-ordinate with it." "The facts . . . are not *true*. They simply *are*. Truth is the

no one has fully apprehended them until their worth-values are appreciated. Moreover, it is reason's function to apply authoritative teaching, and all knowledge as well, to the actual guidance of life and to the practical needs of men. This work has been done of late with brilliant success in the physical sphere. The amazing series of inventions that have transformed the external conditions of life in our age are so many instances of the exercise of this function of reason. The task of moral theologians and pastors is analogous, although with superficial differences. Divine truths have to be treated by them as truths by which to live, and as enabling us so to live in this present world as to advance to our chief end, and attain to everlasting blessedness. Unless enlightened reason is enlisted abundantly in solving the spiritual problems of actual every-day life in the light of revealed truth, such truth remains more or less cryptic and useless. The purpose of revelation is thwarted.[1]

§ 16. Supernatural grace is also a necessary factor

function of the beliefs that start and terminate among them." See James, *Pragmatism*, passim. He says that Dewey's *Studies in Logical Theory* gives the foundation of the system, but commends especially Schiller's *Studies in Humanism*, for clear exposition.

The point of departure, and the fallacy, of pragmatism, is its neologian use of the word "truth." James concedes that facts *are*. Truth is the quality of *propositions* which correctly define the things that are, irrespectively of their use or goodness. The moral issue raised by pragmatism is the right and duty to make our beliefs agree with what *is*, *i.e.* possess objective truth.

[1] The application of reason to the task of applying divine truth practically is one of the chief lines of legitimate development of doctrine. See below, ch. ix. § 5.

in the knowledge of divine things, and the relation of authority to it is important. Teaching is conditioned for its success, as we have seen, by subjective assimilation on the part of its recipients. Even the teaching of infallible authority cannot of itself guarantee success in imparting truth to individual minds.[1] This fact has been mistakenly employed to prove that external authority has no place in religion.[2] In reality, it only proves this, that individuals cannot profit by the teaching of authority unless they fulfil the conditions required for its successful appropriation.

As has been shown above, this subjective appropriation is the function of reason, exercised by moral agents, in whom, it should be added, intellectual, emotional, and volitional faculties always act together. But reason is handicapped in the consideration of spiritual things by an evil heredity, the spiritual wound of blindness as it is called in Dogmatic Theology.[3] Moreover,

[1] See below, ch. iii. § 15 (*d*). Infallible authority should not be confused with infallible guidance. Salmon betrays such confusion of thought repeatedly in his *Infallibility of the Church*, and his arguments against ecclesiastical, as distinguished from papal, infallibility derive the most of their plausibility from this mistake.

[2] For example, by Martineau. See below, ch. iii. § 5.

[3] That we all inherit instincts and tendencies that interfere with the laying hold of higher things, unless brought under by careful self-discipline, is not denied by any considerable number of contemporary thinkers. The difference lies in men's view of the origin of this heredity. Whereas catholic doctrine traces it to a fall from primitive innocency and grace, modern liberals and materialistic biologists regard it exclusively as the survival of an earlier stage in the evolution of the human species, not fully outgrown. So Réville, to give an example, *Liberal Christianity*, pp. 85–86.

truths that require supernatural means for their revelation cannot be assimilated adequately without corresponding supernatural assistance to the reason. None can know the deep things of God except the Spirit of God and those to whom the Spirit makes them known interiorly. In short, spiritual things are discerned spiritually;[1] and this means partly by the right ordering of all our faculties,[2] and partly by their supernatural enlightenment and enhancement. Thus divine grace, or the reason as assisted thereby, is the subjective correlative of supernatural revelation.[3]

The effect of grace upon reason is twofold, corrective and enhancing. It is corrective in that it sanctifies the soul interiorly, that is when co-operated with by the will, restores the harmony of the faculties, and clarifies the spiritual vision by eliminating the distractions which are due to absorption in carnal desires and interests.

Grace also enhances the reason by communicating a supernatural capacity, grounded in a regenerate life in Christ. The spiritual gift of understanding enables the mind to penetrate more deeply than is otherwise

[1] 1 Cor. ii. 9–14. Ἀνακρίνεται, in verse 14, means literally *judged*, or *examined*.

[2] In technical theology the right mutual adjustment and ordering of human faculties is called "integrity." This is said to have been a factor in Adam's original righteousness which was destroyed by sin.

[3] Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, pp. 87, 99–101, 132–134, 138–141, 242–247. See Jackson's *Works*, Bk. V. ch. ix; Scudamore, *Office of the Intellect in Relig.*, passim; Wilhelm and Scannell, *Manual*, Bk. I. ch. i. § 42.

possible into divine mysteries, and the gift of wisdom enhances our perception of the bearing and likelihood of what is revealed.[1]

But the gifts of grace are endowments of our reason, not substitutes for it. They do not alter its laws, but enhance its capacity for receiving divine mysteries. A recovery of physical health may incidentally cure defective senses, and brighter light clarifies our vision. But the same senses are exercised under the improved conditions, and they become more rather than less trustworthy. Similarly the use of a glass enables our eyes to see what is beyond the range of unaided vision. But our eyes are not altered in their structure or operation, and they become more trustworthy with the enhancement of their power. As Bishop Butler says, reason "is the only faculty we have wherewith to judge concerning anything, even revelation itself";[2] and supernatural assistance does but clarify reason and make it more capable and secure in operation, without in the least altering or subverting the laws of its activity.[3] In fact the work of grace is to enrich our reason from its creative source, to assimilate it to its perfect archetype.

§ 17. Personal experience is also a necessary factor in the knowledge of what is taught by authority. Thus, in the first place, knowledge gained by previous

[1] Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, p. 244; Ewer, *Holy Spirit*, Conf. iv; Hutchings, *Holy Ghost*, pp. 192–206, 244–247, 265–272.

[2] *Analogy*, Pt. II. ch. iii. See *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, p. 88.

[3] Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, pp. 87 (*g*), 88, 132.

experience enables us to become intelligent recipients of authoritative teaching, and we grow more intelligent as pupils in the proportion that our experience grows richer. Experience, with our reflection thereon, supplies our minds with certain elementary conceptions that are presupposed in authoritative teaching, with a point of view which facilitates our reception of it. Thus in religion our experience furnishes us with *præambula fidei*, as they are called,[1] or premises discoverable by an enlightened consideration of nature and man, which constitute fundamental presuppositions and interpretive principles of revelation. These are the truths of what is called natural theology, such as the being of God, human responsibility, and the future life.[2]

Then, too, experience affords the data by which the reason is enabled to exercise its functions in relation to authoritative teaching: of verifying, whether directly or indirectly, and of mastering its bearing, and practically applying. This is a commonplace in secular knowledge, and it holds equally in spiritual knowledge. The difference is that the experience which bears on revealed truth is primarily spiritual, as is also the manner in which we employ it.

§ 18. The impulse which all feel who are desirous of arriving at truth, to verify authoritative teaching by other means of information, is a proper impulse, and entirely consistent with due dependence upon au-

[1] Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, p. 138.

[2] Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, pp. 151–159, on presuppositions and their necessity.

thority. It need not spring from an unteachable disposition, but is properly grounded in a desire to strengthen and enrich one's grasp on truth by every available means.[1]

Nothing is credible to a thoughtful and enlightened mind which appears to be wholly unrelated to the contents of human experience at large. All genuine truths are mutually related ultimately and are harmonious, for truth is in its totality one and organic. One truth cannot really conflict with another truth.[2] No doubt the relations between one truth and another are often remote and indirect, and require careful consideration before even their existence becomes apparent. But the general tendency to doubt the truth of a proposition which cannot be related by enlightened reason to any of the contents of experience is instinctive and sound.

[1] See above, § 14. It is mentioned to the credit of the Beœans that their "readiness of mind" in receiving the authoritative teaching of St. Paul caused them to search the Scriptures — *i.e.* another source of information — "whether those things were so." Acts xvii. 11. It is not merely in the ancient prophets that God has spoken "in many portions and in many manners," Heb. i. 1, but also through the avenues of natural experience. Our knowledge, even of things supernaturally revealed, will remain impoverished if we forget this.

[2] The Ritschlian refusal to consider religious truth as related in any way to scientific truth, violates this axiom; and the limiting of the truth of religious propositions to their worth-value implies their untruth in the objective sphere. If Christ, for instance, had only the worth-value of God, He is not God at all. That the irrational means the unrelated, see an illuminating article on "Liberal Theology," in the *Church Quarterly Review* for January, 1906. Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, p. 55 and note 1 *in loc.*; Spencer, *First Principles*, Pt. I. ch. i. § 6.

Verification means finding evidence, more or less convincing, that a given proposition is related to knowledge gained through other channels, and in such wise as to justify our acceptance of it as credible.[1] Verification has many degrees of fulness and usually falls short of complete demonstration. Often its success consists merely in finding a rational place for the teaching of authority, one that enables us to accept it on authority simply, without disturbing our continued acceptance of the contents of experience at large.

Direct verification brings with it a certain amount of proof that the proposition verified is true. It is confined to facts and generalizations of facts, or laws. A statement of fact may lie beyond verification by our own experience, because belonging wholly to the past. In such case verification is accomplished by comparing several lines of testimony, and by discovering agreement between several credible authorities. If we depend upon only one witness, no direct verification is possible.

[1] See Baldwin, *Dic. of Philos.*, *s.v.* "Verification." A verifiable hypothesis is there defined as "one which presents an abundance of necessary consequences open to experimental test." Christian doctrine is not only a body of revealed truth, but may be treated as a general hypothesis which involves a multitude of practical consequences. By spiritual experiment, therefore, we can ascertain whether these consequences are such as seem likely to be realized as the result of obedience to truth. The general credibility of Christian doctrines, thus verified, and their internal coherence, serve to make their essential particulars also credible. Cf. Moberly, in *Lux Mundi*, pp. 220–224; Strong, *Authority*, pp. 114–116. Every line of the internal evidences of Christianity is a line of verification of its authoritative teaching. See Fisher, *Grounds of Belief*, revised ed., pp. 89–90, 142–143.

If the fact in question is a continuing fact, or one that occurs repeatedly, and occurs within our own sphere of observation, direct verification is very simple, although we may have to resort to artificial experiments to bring the fact within our experience. The laws of physical science define such facts, and are subject to this kind of verification. It is a limitation of some scientists that, through long habit of dependence upon the laboratory, they have come to disparage and even to deny the validity of any other than physical verification, although they continue to accept practically many propositions that cannot thus be verified — for example, much of historical science.

§ 19. Much teaching cannot be verified except by indirect methods: for instance, past facts which we know only through single lines of testimony; predictions which can be verified directly only by the event, because they lie beyond our present experience; and revealed mysteries, which are concerned with matters that transcend present human experience. These last may indeed have been verified to their original recipients by supernatural events which accredited the divine source, and therefore the absolute trustworthiness, of authoritative teaching. But these supernatural events fall under the head of past facts, no longer verifiable directly, except by dependence upon the concurrent testimony of witnesses, transmitted through various lines of tradition, written or unwritten. The credibility of these witnesses, and of the traditions by which their testimony is transmitted

to us, has been found, broadly speaking, to be sufficient, so far as the essential articles of the Christian faith are concerned. But direct verification is not available.

Indirect verification has for its purpose to afford reasons, based on other experience and knowledge, however gained, for believing that the given authoritative teaching is not incongruous with our other sure knowledge, but fits in with it in such wise as to justify, or at least permit, our acceptance of it as rationally credible. Thus an appeal to experience rationally considered, and to other means of information generally, may tend to establish one or more of the following conclusions: (*a*) that the teaching in question is not in demonstrable conflict with other truth known to us, and therefore may be true; (*b*) that it is not shown to be incredible by any lines of investigation that are properly relevant to the subject-matter; (*c*) that the teaching which comes from the same authoritative source is consistent and rationally coherent, so that part answers to part in one organic whole, pointing to the conclusion that, if any part is true, all is true, and that the truth of the teaching in general makes for the truth of its parts; (*d*) that it can be made to fit reasonably into related domains of knowledge, for example the march of history in its widest aspect; (*e*) that it actually makes our view of things in general more rational seemingly, and more satisfying to the philosophical instinct; (*f*) that it appears to meet human needs, to solve pressing problems, to make life less of an

enigma and more worth living for, in short to have the worth-value of truth.[1]

It can be seen that these lines of verification derive their value and force from their cumulative effect, and this effect cannot be experienced except by those who submit to the conditions of spiritual knowledge. Only the devout child of God can fully realize the unique congruity of revealed truth with all truth whatsoever. And, just as converging lines of circumstantial evidence may remove all doubts from an intelligent juror's mind, so the cumulative results of spiritual experience may put one in a position to say, "I now know for myself, what once I believed simply on authority." [2] It remains that, in order to know the mysteries of God, one must first accept them on trust, and must continue to depend upon authority for their positive and formal proof.[3]

[1] Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, pp. 90–91, on what it means to show the reasonableness of revealed truth.

[2] It is not inconsistent with our emphasis upon the permissibility and value of verification of divine truth that our Lord pronounced a peculiar blessing upon those that "have not seen, and yet have believed." St. John xx. 29. If we have not yet acquired implicit trust in the authorities on which we depend, loyalty to truth demands further inquiry on our part, so far as it is open to us. Then, too, verification has a wider purpose than the cure of doubt. It *enriches our understanding* of the truths which we have accepted.

[3] The attitude of trust is the ultimate basis of all knowledge. Sir William Hamilton says, "The original data of reason do not rest upon reason, but are necessarily accepted by reason on the authority of what is beyond itself. These data are, therefore, in rigid propriety, *beliefs* or *trusts*." What is called experience is the manifestation to us of data whose source is external to our reason.

CHAPTER II

OBJECTIONS AND ARGUMENTS

PART I. *Objections*

§ 1. We have been concerned thus far with the nature of authority, and its forms, grounds, and relations to other factors of knowledge. In our expositions some of the reasons have appeared which may be urged for insisting upon the necessity and value of dependence upon authority in acquiring knowledge of divine things. In this chapter we shall endeavour to exhibit the arguments for authority more directly and systematically. But it will facilitate this part of our task if we first consider the chief objections that have been urged against dependence upon authority.

§ 2. (*a*) It is urged by rationalists generally that the knowledge which men can gain from experience, with the exercise of natural reason thereon, is sufficient for the guidance of life, and for all human purposes. In particular, it is denied that divine revelation, over and beyond the teaching of nature, is either possible or capable of being authenticated by means that human experience permits us to acknowledge as valid or credible.

Before answering that part of the objection which is concerned with supernatural revelation, it should

be noticed that, as has been shown in the previous chapter, the most aggressive rationalist, if he is a scholar in any sense at all, is compelled, and betrays no unwillingness, to depend upon authority in historical and physical sciences.[1] He is not so foolish as to begin at the bottom rung of the ladder of knowledge and limit himself to what he finds within the minute sphere of his personal experience and reason. If he acts normally and rationally, he accepts, provisionally at least, the teaching of those who have mastered the learning of previous ages, and makes authoritative teaching the basis and working hypothesis of his own studies. Unless he did this he could not hope to advance beyond the childhood of the race. It is unnecessary to dwell on this.

But there is no reason forthcoming to show that a man is more independent of authority in the spiritual realm than in other spheres of knowledge. And it is certain that in every race men are dependent upon tradition for their religious conceptions.[2] Even those who break away from the faiths of their teachers and forefathers are quite unable to shut out traditional conceptions altogether. Nor do wise men undertake to do this. They may indeed be led by their own experience and thinking, whether rightly or not, to modify the views which they have imbibed from their teachers; but to begin *de novo* in the attainment of spiritual knowledge, and without permitting oneself to be influenced

[1] See above, ch. i. §§ 3, 6.

[2] See Hardwick, *Christ and Other Masters*, Pt. II. ch. iii. *init.*

or determined in any respect by the teaching of others, is impossible. If it were possible, the result would be, as we have said above, retrogression to the childhood of the race.

To return to the question of supernatural revelation. It is against dependence upon such revelation that the objection we are considering is especially directed. It may be admitted by the objector that a wise student of religious truth will employ the results of previous investigators in the same field, that is, the results of other men's experience and natural reason, as the point of departure for his own studies.[1] But this, we are reminded, is merely to take note of lines of experience and reason similar to his own, and which he can verify.

Supernatural revelation, it is urged, belongs to a different order of things altogether. The fact of such revelation requires scientific proof, and no such proof is available. Moreover, the propositions which are alleged to be revealed supernaturally are ones that cannot from the nature of the case be verified by any methods known to scientific minds.[2]

We have given considerations in our previous volume of *Introduction*, especially in the chapter on the super-

[1] Thus even Réville, *Liberal Christianity*, p. 76, says that Liberal Protestantism "appeals to the past, most assuredly, because it is always wise to take into account the lessons of the past. He would be rash, indeed, who affected to pay no attention to what humanity has thought and experienced before us."

[2] Stearns, *Evidence of Christian Experience*, ch. vii., considers this difficulty.

natural, and in those on faith and reason,[1] which ought to meet this difficulty. At all events, to discuss it elaborately here would take us away from our appointed task. The difficulty arises from a deistic and mechanical view of the universe, and from an inadequate conception of the divine plan and of human destiny. If the universe were a mechanical order simply, or if what is called natural law summed up the totality of causes and ends that are to be reckoned with, then indeed there would be no place for belief in any other revelation than that the meaning of which natural science is mastering, and no place for the supernatural. Naturalism shuts out from consideration all that pertains to any order of human life beyond the present, and rests in the mournful belief that this life is all. "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."[2] Such a point of view is impossible for a Christian, whose hopes are larger than this life can satisfy, and whose view

[1] See chh. ii., iv., v.

[2] 1 Cor. xv. 32. Cf. verse 19, "If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most pitiable." R. V. Also Isa. xxii. 13. Romanes, in his *Candid Examination of Theism*, written under the assumed name of Physicus, says, p. 114, "when at times I think, as think at times I must, of the appalling contrast between the hallowed glory of that creed which once was mine, and the lonely mystery of existence as now I find it, — at such times I shall ever feel it impossible to avoid the sharpest pang of which my nature is susceptible . . . I cannot but feel that for me, and for others who think as I do, there is a dreadful truth in those words of Hamilton, — Philosophy having become a meditation, not merely of death, but of annihilation, the precept *know thyself* has become transformed into the terrific oracle to Oedipus — 'Mayest thou ne'er know the truth of what thou art.'"

of the march of events includes principles of causation, lines of progress, and purposes to be realized, which transcend what can be learned either by unassisted reason or from natural experience, but which determine his own possibilities, aspirations, and duties in a radical manner. Without supernatural revelation he is quite unable to rise to the larger and truer ideal of life, or to make progress towards the destiny appointed for him — his chief end.[1]

The proofs that ought to be demanded of supernatural revelation, from the nature of the case, lie outside the sphere of natural science, which is concerned with events of purely natural causation;[2] and the same may be asserted touching the verification of revealed mysteries, as has been shown in the previous chapter.[3] In brief, the rationalistic demand for scientific proof and scientific verification is really unscientific. It expresses a refusal to accept such evidence, and to pursue such methods of verification, as are appropriate to the subject-matter. The word "scientific" is

[1] Underlying the whole scheme of Christianity is the thought that we are made to "glorify God and enjoy Him forever." This is man's chief end, and Christianity affords knowledge, ways, and practices — necessary to be acquired, pursued, and obeyed — which depend for discovery and sanction upon supernatural revelation. The nature of Christian righteousness is determined in its primary and determinative elements by such revelation.

[2] That is, using the word "proofs" strictly. Natural science does afford abundant indirect evidence of the insufficiency of natural knowledge to satisfy human aspirations, and the notion that these aspirations are to remain unsatisfied is unphilosophical.

[3] See §§ 18, 19.

used in the restricted sense of naturalistic, as if the supernatural were necessarily unscientific.[1]

§ 3. (*b*) Another objection is that the human mind is made narrow and superstitious when governed by servile dependence upon authority, and becomes paralyzed. Our reason is given us in order to be exercised, and a strenuous maintenance of the right to acquire truth rationally, such as is found among intelligent men generally, is justified by man's deepest instincts. It cannot be overruled without mental disaster; and history shows all along that the peoples who depend most absolutely upon authority are the most backward in intellectual progress and the most superstitious.

We do not deny that servility of mind is conducive to mental degradation and superstition. And if our dependence upon authority is of a servile nature, the trustworthiness of the authority depended upon will not save us from superstition. Authority has no magical power to enlighten an intelligence that is inert or otherwise incapable of enlightened progress. But the evil lies in the subjective factor, not in that dependence upon legitimate authority which we are defending.[2]

[1] The scientific claim of theology — the science of the supernatural — is discussed in *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. i. Pt. V.

[2] Some orthodox writers certainly do describe the nature and functions of dogmatic authority in mechanical terms, suggestive of magical efficiency, irrespective of rational and spiritual methods of appropriating truth on the part of believers. But they caricature the true notion of dogmatic authority.

It is not true, for instance, that the acceptance of infallible authority involves no private — *i.e.* fallible — judgment, or that it secures infallible certainty. Human certainty is always such as is possible

Such dependence is grounded in enlightened reason, appeals to it, and both widens and adds security to its exercise.

No doubt authority may be illegitimately employed, or may be extended beyond its appointed sphere and purpose. It is the undeniable right and duty of enlightened reason to detect such abuses, and to restrict dependence upon authority to those limits within which such dependence can be justified rationally.

If an authority can be seen to be trustworthy, so that its teaching is credible, and we defend no other authority, then our dependence upon it is rational. The reason is afforded larger knowledge, and emancipated rather than enslaved.[1] We refer, of course, to reason

for a fallible individual understanding. Absolute trustworthiness of an authority is one thing, the degree of subjective certainty which can be gained in relation to its claims and teaching is another. We may not confuse infallible authority with infallible guidance, for the success of guidance depends upon subjective conditions in individual and fallible men. The certainty of faith may be so full as to exclude doubt; but in human beings both certainty and doubt are subjective qualities of fallible understandings.

The demand for infallible certainty is both futile and unnecessary. It is enough that God affords derivative teaching authority that may be trusted, and sufficient evidence of its trustworthiness to persuade the spiritually teachable to take advantage of it rationally and spiritually.

[1] As Maccoll shows, *On the Creed*, pp. 1–6, a creed serves as a fence to ward off encroachments upon the faith; but, "Freedom of thought does not mean an unlimited right to accept any conclusion; it means liberty to work out the right conclusion." The opposite of freedom of thought is deadening constraint, not mental certainty as to truth. Jeremy Taylor says, *Liberty of Prophesying*, § 10, "The difference is not between reason and authority, but between

that is not paralyzed by other causes, but is both ready and capable. No system of education can succeed with the unready and incapable. As we have said before, in no other sphere of knowledge except the spiritual do men consider the acquisition of new knowledge to be prejudicial to freedom of thought. It is not scientific, then, to object to authority on the *a priori* ground that dependence upon it enslaves the mind. The only objection that is really open to serious discussion is *a posteriori*, the claim that a particular authority is not trustworthy. We are as opposed as anybody to dependence upon an authority that cannot rationally be regarded as trustworthy. No doubt docile children depend upon the authority of their elders before they are capable of understanding why. But it remains that what they do instinctively, as it were, is approved by thoughtful people because sound reason is found to justify their practice, which is not servile but the necessary condition of successful education. The attitude towards authority which we defend is not one of blindly believing what we are ordered to believe, but of making intelligent use of the most trustworthy means available for extending the range of our knowledge.

§ 4. (*c*) A third objection, somewhat akin to the last, concerns the effect of authoritative teaching upon

this reason and that, which is greater." If authority is seen to teach the truth needed, it is greater reason. Moberly shows, in *Lux Mundi*, pp. 260–261, that Christian dogmatism is really an emphasis on truth; and, pp. 219–220, that truth is not an enemy to intellectual freedom. St. John viii. 32. Cf. above, p. 15; and Hooker, *Eccles. Polity*, II. vii. 6 *init;* Stanton, *Place of Authority*, pp. 13–17.

immature minds. It is said that such teaching imparts a bias and prejudice which nullifies, or at least limits, the openness of mind that should characterize genuine truth-seeking; and it is urged that the importance of freedom from bias is proportionate to the importance of the subject-matter of one's studies. This objection concerns primarily the dogmatic and catechetical teaching of the young, although it is applicable to the teaching of the ignorant generally.[1]

Those who urge this objection start with an unscientific assumption — that in order to approach rational investigation with an open mind, one must be free from all presuppositions, and must possess a mind that is, in relation to the particular subject-matter, a *tabula rasa.* But in fact no one can thus approach any important or large subject of investigation. All truth is inter-related, and all men of intelligence find themselves possessed of ideas, otherwise derived, that are related to each new subject of study, and which constitute inevitable presuppositions in such study. A mental *tabula rasa* does not exist,[2] certainly not when the mind is sufficiently mature to engage in scientific investigation. It is, therefore, not a scientific requirement that a student should be free from presuppositions. To say so is to

[1] Stanton, *Place of Authority*, pp. 7–10, exhibits the danger to immature minds of leaving religious truths open.

[2] The theory of an initial mental *tabula rasa* originated with the Stoics. Locke described the mind as a piece of white paper. *Essay upon Human Understanding*, Bk. II. ch. i. § 2. Leibnitz criticised him, and in doing so coined and gave currency to the phrase *tabula rasa.* Baldwin, *Dic. of Philos.*, *s. v.* "Tabula Rasa."

maintain that he should be unintelligent. Openness of mind is indeed necessary for successful investigation in any department of knowledge; but this does not mean an avoidance of presuppositions, but subjective realization of their nature, readiness to allow duly for them, and willingness, if later knowledge demands this, to modify or even to abandon them. What sort of student would he be who refused to accept the teaching of elementary text-books in the physical sciences for fear that his mind would be hampered in more advanced and personal laboratory work?[1]

It is, of course, essential that one's presuppositions should be as sound as possible.[2] To begin from a right point of view in personal investigation is obviously very desirable, and may determine radically one's success as a scientist.[3] But this means that his early teaching should be as true and reasonable as practicable. It does not mean that he should be left to form his first notions without superior guidance. The self-

[1] Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. vi. Pt. II., pp. 151–159.

[2] Children do not wait in this matter, but begin forming presuppositions at once. It depends, therefore, on their earliest training whether these will be correct or not. This is as true in religion as, to give an important parallel, in morals.

[3] The aim which justifies a scientist in adopting as a working hypothesis what is as yet not fully established, is to secure a point of view which seems likely to give greater value to his subsequent investigation. Catholic dogma, imparted to young minds, performs the duty of a working hypothesis; and the fact that such dogma will hold its own to the end is not a proof of its warping effect upon the mind, but of its ability, because true, to stand the tests which subsequent experience makes available.

educated man is rarely able to attain to the higher ranks of scholarship. Sound premises and solid foundations, such as require competent instruction for their successful mastery, are clearly essential; and their necessity is peculiarly great in spiritual matters, wherein our highest and eternal welfare is involved.

The sum of the matter is that the immature ought to receive the most trustworthy instruction in divine truth that can be had; and the more precise this teaching is, provided it be true, the better will their minds be equipped for the more mature and personal consideration of spiritual realities. To say otherwise is to abandon in religion the principles of common sense that govern intelligent education in other spheres of knowledge.[1] The fact is that those who raise the objection we are considering are really governed by the presupposition that no assured knowledge of divine things exists which can be imparted to immature minds without the necessity of its subsequent correction, if the pupil becomes a competent student. We have discussed this difficulty very fully in our volume on *Introduction*.[2]

§ 5. (*d*) The late Dr. Martineau says, "If to rest on authority is to mean an acceptance of what, as

[1] It may be objected that the dogmatic language which children are made to memorize conveys no meaning to them. That is not quite true. Children do discern a superficial meaning, if reasonably intelligent, and that meaning grows upon them with their mental growth. Thus the phrases which are learned when the memory is peculiarly tenacious become permanent premises of thought, and are never outgrown. Cf. Ephes. vi. 4.

[2] See ch. i. § 25 and ch. v.

foreign to my faculty,[1] I cannot know, in mere reliance on the testimony of one who can and does, I certainly find no such basis for religion; inasmuch as second-hand belief, assented to at the dictation of an initiated expert,[2] without personal response of thought and reverence in myself, has no more tincture of religion in it than any other lesson learned by rote.[3] The mere resort to testimony for information beyond our province does not fill the meaning of 'authority'; which we never acknowledge till that which speaks to us from another and higher strikes home and wakes the echoes in ourselves, and is thereby instantly transferred from external attestation to self-evidence.[4] And this response it is

[1] Revealed truths are not *foreign* to our faculties. If they were they could not be revealed to us. But they transcend merely natural experience, require the aid of grace for their assimilation, and have to be made known supernaturally and transmitted to subsequent generations by authoritative means.

[2] Invidious terminology. "Second-hand belief" refers really to the common-sense habit of trusting those who have more direct means of information than we possess. "Dictation" suggests an arbitrariness that does not inhere necessarily in correct teaching. And "an initiated expert" is more descriptive of a natural scientist than of a messenger from God. It is not what has been discovered by experts, but what has been received from God, that is submitted to our assent by ecclesiastical and biblical authority.

[3] Certainly to learn divine truth merely "by rote" "has no tincture of religion in it." There must be "personal response of thought and reverence." This is merely to acknowledge that authoritative teaching is not the only factor in a truly religious guidance. Authority is not rightly discredited because found to be unable to take the place of other factors equally vital.

[4] Authority, if valid at all, is valid irrespectively of and prior to our acknowledgment of it. And our acknowledgment does not "transfer"

which makes the moral intuitions, started by outward appeals, reflected back by inward veneration, more than egoistic phenomena and, turning them into correspondency between the universal and the individual mind, invests them with true 'authority.' We trust in them, not with any rationalist arrogance because they are our own, but precisely because they are *not* our own, with awe and inspiration. The *consciousness* of authority is doubtless human; but conditional on the *source* being Divine." [1]

Behind all this is an emphatic repudiation of miraculous revelations, and of the mechanical kind of infallibility which he supposes to be claimed for the Church and Scripture by his opponents. The only authority in religion that he acknowledges is immediately divine, making itself felt exclusively in the human conscience.

it from "external attestation to self-evidence." The mysteries of divine revelation are not self-evident on this side the grave. But if they became so, this would be only on the condition that external authority had presented them to our minds for consideration. In any case, external authority is not changed into something else by our recognition of the truth of its teaching, nor is its claim and value nullified thereby.

[1] *Seat of Authority*, pp. vi, vii. Réville raises a similar objection, that when we accept authority we do so on grounds of reason, so that it is the adhesion of our mind that gives authority its weight. *Liberal Christianity*, pp. 175, 176. He confuses the rational process of *discovering* the validity of authority's claim with the *making* of authority. It is because authority is valid prior to our reasoning that it is discovered to be credible by reason; and it is this prior validity that reason discovers, thus establishing the rationality of our dependence upon authority.

Martineau's objection is considered by Stanton, *Authority*, pp. 29–33.

It there commands us to seek the better and shun the worse. What is better or worse is discerned progressively, he urges, under the same sure guidance, as the data of social experience enlarge.[1]

Dr. Martineau was prejudiced against external or objective authority partly at least because he considered it only in mechanical caricature, and as something which must displace reason and enslave the will. This appears clearly in his chapters on the catholic and protestant conceptions of authority — catholic meaning with him papal.[2] In criticising external authority he appears to assume that its objective validity depends upon the subjective assimilation of its teaching. Thus revelation is made to mean in effect subjective intuition, often occasioned and caused, no doubt, by the external presentation of data, but having no validity as revelation except in the intuitive perceptions of the mind. Religious truth is regarded as self-evidencing.

We are reminded of Coleridge's view of biblical inspiration, that the Bible is inspired in so far as it finds and inspires the reader.[3] The notion of objective authority is really nullified. The answer lies in a clearer distinction between the function of authority and that of the reason and conscience. Authority presents truth to the mind, and does so none the less

[1] *Seat of Authority*, Bk. I. ch. ii.

[2] *Seat of Authority*, Bk. II.

[3] "In short, whatever *finds* me, bears witness for itself that it has proceeded from a Holy Spirit." *Letters on the Inspiration of the Scriptures*, I. v.

really whether it is rightly understood or not. The objective factor, in short, is a real one, and necessary for the proposition of what is not otherwise brought to the attention of the reason or otherwise attested. The subjective factor is also real, and it is the function of the reason to consider the credibility of authority, to verify what is taught in manners suitable to the subject-matter, and to assimilate and apply it. Neither the external proposition of truth nor the subjective consideration of it is sufficient alone for spiritual knowledge, but each is nevertheless necessary.[1]

It is not the normal method of God to teach men immediately from within, but rather in a manner agreeing with the constitution of human nature and with the ordinary methods of human knowledge. We learn by the exercise of subjective faculties; but the truths which we learn come to us objectively, either in the form of the data of experience or in that of the testimony of others.[2] It is not otherwise with spiritual knowledge. The human spirit neither receives nor communicates thought, nor even thinks, independently of external signs or operations extraneous to the mind itself.[3] The gifts of the Holy Spirit enlighten the mind indeed, but in this sense, that they clarify it and enable it to interpret and as-

[1] All this has been shown in our discussion of the relations between authority and reason, in the previous chapter, §§ 10–15.

[2] Strong, *Authority*, pp. 25, 26.

[3] Thought is conditioned by movements of the grey matter of the brain, and only strict materialists confuse the two.

similate in its own manner what is otherwise proposed to it.[1]

§ 6. (*e*) Another objection is based on a disparagement of religious doctrine. We hear it urged that religion is not a matter of abstract knowledge at all, but of subjective and personal drawing to God and to righteousness. The purpose of God in educating the race is not to impart exact information touching mysterious subjects; but to manifest Himself to us, and to assimilate our characters to His own by our personal acquaintance and contact with Himself. There is, therefore, no place in true religion for an authoritative promulgation of information concerning matters that lie outside the appointed limits of human experience and reason.[2]

The mistake here lies in a false conception of the purport of authoritative doctrine. It is indeed the supreme end of religion that we should know God and

[1] See above, pp. 24, 25.

[2] Thus Martineau is ready to acknowledge the *a priori* possibility of our receiving information about invisible things through others. He does not deny the validity of "authority for intellectual assent to what I learn from persons better informed." He contends, however, that "it has no tincture of religion in it." *Seat of Authority*, p. x. Réville, in *Liberal Christianity*, pp. 64 *et seq.*, takes a somewhat similar line. Schleiermacher took a sentimental view of religion, as consisting of a feeling of dependence upon some higher Power. Liddon exposes the inadequacy of such a view in the admirable opening lecture of his *Some Elements of Religion*. In his *Divinity of our Lord*, pp. 3–5, he points out, in relation to Schleiermacher, the impossibility of the feeling of dependence gaining secure support without a definition of its Object, *i.e.* without dogma.

His Son Jesus Christ.[1] But there is a divine plan to which we have to conform in the attainment of this end, as well as ways to be pursued, and facts and conditions to be reckoned with. Christian doctrines contain the elements of knowledge which enable us to do all this, so as to pursue our chief end intelligently and securely. They are no mere *formulæ*, imposed only for our probation, but truths by which to live, the lack of which would not only leave us groping, but would deprive us of the enthusiasm that men feel when they understand whither they are going and walk in light.[2]

§ 7. (*f*) Still another objection is based on the fallibility of authoritative teaching, and its liability to err. To err is human, and we are often quite unable to distinguish between correct and erroneous authoritative teaching. This is borne out by all experience, for the history of human progress in knowledge is to a considerable extent the history of modifications and abandonments of previous teaching. Moreover, if such be the case with the knowledge of nature, which lies open to common observation, it is still more likely that teaching concerning the profound mysteries of the spiritual world will be found to be defective and often wholly at fault.[3]

[1] "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." St. John xvii. 3.

[2] 1 St. John i. 5–7. Cf. St. John xii. 35, 36; Ephes. v. 8.

[3] Martineau, *Seat of Authority*, pp. 132–152, portrays at length the variations of opinion within the Church, failing, of course, to distinguish the vagaries of individuals and parties from the dogmatic teaching of the Church. As to the question of errors in the Scriptures, see below, ch. vii. §§ 5–7.

The objection proves too much; for, if it is valid in any sphere, it militates against all educational authority whatsoever. Men of common sense do not reject the reasonableness of dependence upon parental and academic teaching, or the necessity of such teaching for the intellectual advance of the young, because it is confessedly fallible. We all are children in regard to the deep things of God; so that, if we are to advance in spiritual knowledge at all, we need competent teaching. By competent teaching is meant teaching that is grounded in knowledge which our own experience has not given us, even though it retains the note of fallibility that attaches to human teaching generally. In short, the necessity of dependence upon authority is not grounded in the infallibility of authority, but in social relations, in the limitations of individual experience, and in the relatively superior knowledge and teaching capacity of those upon whose authority we depend. Moreover, authoritative teaching suffices for practical purposes, and meets a real need, even though it falls short of infallibility.[1]

§ 8. But we have not yet faced the real difficulty, which is caused by the claim of absolute finality for the teaching of the Catholic Church and of Holy Scripture touching doctrines and practices alleged to be necessary for salvation. Such a claim is based neces-

[1] William Law, in *Three Letters to the Bishop of Bangor*, I, shows that the reality of ecclesiastical authority does not depend upon its absoluteness. Cf. Salmon, *Infallibility*, pp. 109–116, who writes, however, as rejecting the Church's claim to infallibility *in toto*. Cf. also Stanton, *Place of Authority*, pp. 6, 7.

sarily, as catholic writers readily acknowledge, upon the assumption that the Catholic Church and the Scriptures are in some sense infallible. Thus the individual mind, it is alleged, is placed at the mercy of authority and is robbed of an inalienable right to modify or reject its teaching, when widening experience and more mature reflection demand the one or the other. The reason is thus stultified.

Perhaps no difficulty connected with the subject of authority is more keenly felt than this. But it arises partly from disbelief in the supernatural, which we cannot discuss at this point;[1] and partly from misconception as to the nature and practical consequences for human reason of ecclesiastical and biblical infallibility, a subject which can be considered more intelligently later on.[2] It is enough for the present to point out that, if ecclesiastical and biblical authority are really infallible, it is a blunder to speak of reason being at their mercy or stultified. Infallibility means absolute trustworthiness in teaching truth; and no sensible person supposes that reason is suppressed or stultified by being afforded knowledge that is absolutely correct. Reason that resents trustworthy information is certainly not sound reason, or entitled to be reckoned with by sincere truth-seekers.[3] The issue then is one

[1] See *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. ii.

[2] See especially ch. iii. Pt. III. on ecclesiastical infallibility; but also ch. vii. §§ 5, 6, on certain aspects of biblical infallibility.

[3] "For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." 2 Cor. xiii. 8. Without doubting the entire sincerity of many who allege their concern for sound reason as the ground of their repudia-

of evidence. Can the Church, for example, make good her claim to exercise final and infallible authority within the sphere of revealed and saving doctrine? In the proper place, we shall give reasons for believing that she can.

II. *Arguments for Authority*

§ 9. We are now in a position to sum up briefly the positive arguments which justify our contention that dependence upon authority, especially upon ecclesiastical and biblical authority, in the sphere of revealed truth, is reasonable, practically helpful, and necessary.

(*a*) Our first argument is that dependence upon authority is in fact universal and inevitable in every department of knowledge and life.[1] It is impossible for any one to escape being influenced in judgment concerning truth and practical principles by the existing state of knowledge of others, and by the judgments of those whose experience and wisdom appear to be larger in any particulars, or riper, than his own. Children instinctively accept many ideas and principles from their elders, even when most desirous to assert their mental independence; and they do this to a far

tion of infallibility, we cannot but suspect that the cause of the difficulty is at times intellectual pride. It is hard for an unspiritual soul to acknowledge its insufficiency in spiritual matters, and the necessity that it should occupy the position of a disciple to the end. That the reason which exhibits itself in authoritative teaching is larger and truer than one's own reason cannot be realized except by the spiritual and humble-minded, for spiritual things are spiritually discerned.

[1] Cf. ch. i. §§ 3, 4, above.

37130
THE CINCINNATI BIBLE SEMINARY
230

greater extent than they realize at the time. Current notions, largely traditional, determine men's presuppositions, in spite of themselves, in every line of thought and study. These presuppositions may be modified or abandoned as the result of personal investigation and reflection, but their inevitableness at the outset is notorious. Likewise in science. If one desires to master a science, he seeks first of all to ascertain what his predecessors have discovered, as registered in text-books. One who wishes to become an astronomer, but refuses to accept, provisionally at least, the generally accepted laws of motion of the heavenly bodies, is foredoomed to be defeated in his purpose.[1]

The same inevitableness attends the attainment of religious knowledge. One may indeed defer by mistake to incompetent guidance. But even the most radical believer in liberalism takes his presuppositions to a considerable extent from others — perhaps from liberal writers — and is wont to fortify his position by appealing to the concurrence of others, whose competency he admires.[2] The biblical critic is no exception. He defers to "results" because of the scholarly competence of those who are supposed to

[1] Hooker treats our dependence upon the authority of others in divine things as analogous to the practice of scientists in their sphere. *Eccles. Polity*, II. vii. 4. Cf. Darwell Stone, *The Christian Church*, p. 2. Balfour, *Foundations of Belief*, pp. 203–208, shows the practical impossibility of avoiding dependence upon authority. Cf. pp. 221–227.

[2] "Even the ardent advocate of 'free thought' will crowd his margins and appendixes with 'authorities.'" McLaren, *Catholic Dogma*, p. 22.

have established them; and his own work consists partly in verifying what he has accepted from others. He also calls on others, confessedly unequal to expert investigation, to be governed by the latest scholarship; which means by the authority of others.

So it is that the humble Christian believer, who recognizes that he must be guided by authority in matters beyond his personal experience, simply imitates in the spiritual sphere the inevitable conduct of all men in every sphere. If this is irrational, then all men are irrational.

§ 10. (*b*) That dependence upon authority is rational appears in the undeniable fact that without such dependence no one can advance in knowledge a step beyond what lies within his own untutored experience.[1] We say "untutored," for to be tutored and trained means to be helped by authority, and thus to acquire such preliminary knowledge and guidance as is necessary to proceed intelligently in one's own observation and thinking. What progress could an infant make who grew up in isolation and learned nothing from others? He would inevitably become a savage or an absurd eccentric.

To take one obvious illustration, what sort of history would be available if authority were rejected? It is to an important extent his recognition that knowledge of the past depends upon acceptance of what seems to be the most trustworthy testimony of others that is available, which accounts for the Christian's

[1] Cf. ch. i. § 12, above.

belief in the primary verities of Christian doctrine. His belief in revelation is grounded in his acceptance of certain facts of history, and his acceptance of these facts is due to a method of procedure in such matters which all men observe in their study of the past. The only way by which his position can be overthrown is by showing the untrustworthiness of the authorities upon which he depends. The demand that he should not depend upon authority means that he should abandon in religion the principles of common sense that are observed in other spheres of knowledge.

§ 11. (*c*) A third argument for dependence upon authority is the value for general progress of the knowledge which is gained by dependence upon it. Such value is conditioned, of course, by the competency and trustworthiness of the authority depended upon. Thus the dependence of superstitious pagan races upon the authority of their priests and sages is shorn of much of its value by the incompetency and untrustworthiness of their teachers. This merely shows that authority should be tested. The fact is that, speaking generally, authority grows more competent with the general progress of knowledge,[1] and this progress depends upon the acceptance by each generation

[1] Because authoritative teaching registers the knowledge previously attained, which grows more secure age by age. The fact that catholic doctrine registers what has been revealed once for all modifies this in the sphere of dogma; but even ecclesiastical dogma represents the attainment of a more articulate consciousness of what has been revealed, and the Church's experience is continually deepening the grounds of assurance that revealed truth is rational.

of the knowledge transmitted by those who have assimilated what has been learned in preceding generations.

It is to be emphasized, then, that human progress is made possible only by each generation beginning at the level of knowledge gained by its predecessors, and this involves dependence upon authority. If each generation began over again, progress beyond what one generation could learn would be hopelessly impossible.[1]

This consideration applies to every sphere of progress. One fact will illustrate our contention. The invention of printing is generally considered to have been one of the most important factors in modern progress. Such an opinion rests obviously on a general recognition that a wide diffusion of knowledge by competent writers, that is, by authorities, makes for human progress.

Another cause of modern progress is the enlargement of spheres of action in which intelligent co-operation is possible. But co-operation is necessarily based upon an acceptance of common principles and common points of view. And the prevalence of common principles is due to the acceptance by men in general of what is thought to be the most competent guidance and the best systems of education. This means, of course, general dependence upon the authority of men of learning, who are what they are by reason of their own acceptance of the results attained by the wise men who have preceded them.

The acceptance of authority in religion affords the

[1] Cf. ch. i. § 12, above.

same advantages. There is such a thing as progress in religious intelligence, and it depends upon conditions analogous to those of other spheres of progress. Israel advanced in religious conceptions and ideals through readiness to imbibe as well as to advance beyond what previous generations had learned. The Catholic Church advanced in its assimilation of spiritual things by accepting a faith once for all delivered, which has furnished fruitful premises of thought to her theologians ever since. Why is twentieth-century theology richer, and why is modern Christianity so progressive in its efforts to apply Christian principles to current problems? Whatever else may have contributed to such progress, a vital factor has been the Church's possession of revealed truths, and a heritage of many centuries of reflection thereon by the wisest men of each age.[1] It is the acceptance of this heritage, even by those who repudiate some of its contents, that makes modern triumphs in sacred learning a possibility.

§ 12. (*d*) Finally, there is the effect on individuals of being guided by authoritative teaching. They are thus brought into line with the general progress of mankind, and are made sharers in all the benefits of civilization. The pure individualist is always handicapped in life. Failing to conform to the ways of his age he becomes stranded on the shores of life. He is called eccentric; and this means that he seeks to build on the petty foundations of his isolated experience, and lags behind.

[1] Cf. ch. ix. §§ 1, 5, below.

So it is in spiritual things. The pure individualist attains only to a stunted growth. His mind becomes warped, one-sided, and narrow. How different it is when he is willing to be taught the deep things of God! He thus receives truths which are no mere puzzles, but truths by which to live, secrets of salvation, lights on the road of eternal life, principles of entire perfection in righteousness, beginnings of an intelligent mastery of the future.[1]

Then too, certain valuable elements of character are fostered by the habit of dependence upon competent authority. Docility is a virtue and, when intelligently cultivated, brings forth the fruits of a humility and intellectual modesty which are consistent with, and round out, all that is valuable in self-reliance.

To conclude, to reject the principle of dependence upon competent authority is to repudiate the inevitable, to bar the way to progress, to deprive oneself of countless advantages in life, and to sink into eccentricity and unintelligence. And to reject this principle in the sphere of religion is to assume that religion is irrational, so that we need not be governed in its sphere by the principles of common sense which are acknowledged to be vital elsewhere.

§ 13. We saw in the previous chapter that reason has two general functions in relation to authoritative

[1] It should be noted that the same principle holds good with national Churches. Just to the extent that the Anglican Churches refuse to defer to the larger mind of the Catholic Church in general they become provincial and insular, and their theological atmosphere becomes narrow and one-sided.

teaching: (*a*) of investigating and testing the trustworthiness of the authority which gives it; (*b*) of assimilating, relating, verifying and applying practically what is taught by authority. The latter function has been sufficiently considered for our purpose; but it remains to summarize briefly and comment upon the tests which reason will properly apply to authority in order to verify its claims.

(*a*) The first and most obvious test is that of sufficient and superior information within the sphere of teaching involved. This requires not only that the authority in question must have had adequate means and opportunities of acquiring the knowledge claimed by it, but also that it must have been capable of acquiring that knowledge correctly.

We believe that ecclesiastical authority stands such a test, because of adequate instruction by supernatural revelation, and by reason of illumination by the Holy Spirit. Similarly we are rationally persuaded that the Sacred Scriptures embody correctly, and in manifold ways and degrees, the contents of the revelation given to the Church. If this revelation came truly from God,[1] and if the Church was guided by the Spirit in appropriating it,[2] and the sacred writers were divinely inspired in embodying it,[3] ecclesiastical and biblical

[1] We have discussed supernatural revelation in *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. ii. Pt. II. Proofs of the genuineness of Christian revelation belong to apologetics.

[2] The subject of the guidance of the Spirit afforded to the Church is treated of in ch. iii. § 8, below.

[3] On the inspiration of the Holy Scripture see ch. vi. Pt. I, below.

authority can stand the test of superiority in knowledge.[1]

(*b*) The second test is that of honesty and sincere purpose of teaching the truth in its purity and integrity. This is indispensable. Happily the integrity of the original prophetic and apostolic witnesses is beyond suspicion.[2] And the anxiety of the Church to guard her deposit of truth by meeting its perversions with precise dogmatic definitions, and by the discipline of heretics, has been so emphatic that her very faithfulness has been the basis of frequent complaint that she

[1] That is, within the appointed sphere of revealed and saving truth and principles. We do not depend upon these authorities to solve extraneous problems.

It should be noted that the Church's life spans the interval of time between the publication of the Gospel and the present age. She is in the fullest sense a contemporary and direct witness of the Gospel facts. And these facts moulded her organization and chief institutions in such wise as to make her a permanent, significant, and easily interpreted concrete memorial, as well as an ever living witness, of the experiences and revelations with which her life began.

[2] We are here speaking on purely human grounds, although we do not forget the evidence that these witnesses were assisted and guided by the Holy Spirit. The sobriety, competency, and sincerity of the first preachers of the Gospel has been vindicated thousands of times, and has withstood successfully every critical assault of modern times. Cf. Fisher's *Grounds of Belief*, ch. xii. Practically every manual of apologetics treats of the subject. It is to be remembered that the fact of the resurrection is attested with peculiar force, amid all variations of detail, and this fact gives credibility to the whole Gospel narrative and to our Lord's claim and teaching. See Sparrow-Simpson, *Our Lord's Resurrection*, ch. i-vii; V. Rose, *Studies on the Gospels*, ch. viii.; and Day, *The Evidence for the Resurrection*, for treatments of the essential harmony of the witnesses to the resurrection.

values orthodoxy more than charity — as if charity could flourish apart from truth.[1]

(*c*) A third test concerns capacity to teach correctly. Knowledge does not necessarily involve such capacity, for what is known needs translation into terms which can be understood under changed conditions of thought and speech. Authority is not discredited, however, when those who would test its capacity neglect to fulfil the peculiar conditions that are indispensable in the particular subject-matter. A wilful schoolboy is not a competent judge of the competency of his teachers, nor is one who lacks spiritual docility capable of testing rightly the competency of spiritual authority. We are not concerned, therefore, to prove the capacity of the Church and Scripture to impart spiritual knowledge to unspiritual and unteachable minds. Our contention, made good we believe by this treatise at large, is that, in spite of the occasional prevalence of heresy, in spite of schism and the confusion that sectarianism engenders, the Catholic Church has succeeded in teaching her faithful children the substantial contents of what was given her to teach in primitive days.[2]

[1] The wrangling which attended the proceedings of the Ecumenical Councils owed its intensity largely to the seriousness with which any alteration of the original deposit was regarded by those who succeeded in framing their decisions.

[2] Sectarianism engenders confusion, among other reasons, because it separates the two authorities of Church and Scripture from each other, and in interpreting Scripture substitutes private judgment for the Church's faith. Thus the "obedience of faith" is violated. It should be added that the ability of the Church to teach may not be impugned, as long as those who submit to her ways are in fact

(*d*) Another test has reference to the sphere within which an authority claims to be competent. A chemical expert is deferred to in chemical matters, but not necessarily in other concerns. The sphere within which ecclesiastical and biblical authority is claimed is spiritual; and, if an ecclesiastical utterance, or scriptural passage, contains or implies teaching in other matters, we do not attribute the same authority to such teaching that we do to spiritual teachings from the same source. We are convinced that, within their appointed sphere, the authority of the Church and of Scripture, reasonably taken, has never been successfully impugned.[1]

(*e*) Finally, authoritative teaching must not be demonstrably irrational, that is, impossible to bring into intelligible and credible relation to other truth, if it is to be accepted by intelligent men. Ecclesiastical and biblical authority can stand this test. And every

led into saving truth in proportion to individual capacities, merely because her methods of teaching do not conform to mechanical and *a priori* ideas of what they ought to be. And it should not be forgotten that the leading contents of the Church's teaching are defined in the catholic creeds, which have always been intelligible to those who seek to accept the permanent mind of the Church.

[1] We shall treat of the limitations of ecclesiastical infallibility in ch. iii. § 11; and of the alleged errors in Scripture incidentally in ch. vi, and more directly in ch. vii. §§ 5, 6. The distinction between ecumenical doctrine and the positions of theologians and ecclesiastics is important in this connection. Draper's *History of the Conflict between Religion and Science*, and White's *Warfare of Science with Theology*, may well be consulted — not without caution, however. Fisher's *Grounds of Belief*, note 22, pp. 435–447, is suggestive and helpful.

line of Christian apologetic, by which the internal coherence and reasonableness of catholic doctrine is exhibited, its freedom from conflict with other knowledge, and its practical value to humanity, constitutes evidence of our contention.[1]

[1] Cf. ch. i. §§ 14, 15, above. Goodwin's *Foundations of the Creed*, and Maccoll *On the Creed*, are largely devoted to showing the reasonableness of the Church's ecumenical doctrines. Liddon, *Divinity of our Lord*, pp. 360–363, shows that the doctrines of Christianity, because they claim absolute allegiance of a kind that involves heavy responsibilities, have to undergo very rude and hostile testing through the ages, a testing that purges out accretions and causes that only to survive which is true and rational.

CHAPTER III

ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITY

I. *Doctrinal Authority in General*

§ 1. It has been shown in the preceding chapters that dependence upon teaching authority is both practically inevitable and rationally justifiable; and that this holds good in spiritual things. It has also been indicated that the claims which ecclesiastical and biblical authority make — of supernatural sanctions, and of finality in doctrine [1] — do not alter the reasonableness of our dependence upon such authority, if these claims can be made good.

Broadly speaking, authority in the sphere of divine truth is divided into divine and human.[2] Perhaps, in view of the fact that the ultimate source and sanction

[1] "Finality" in this connection means simply that the teaching of the Catholic Church and Holy Scripture is in fact permanently true and valid, so that no increase of knowledge can warrant its rejection or reduce its value for the guidance of life.

[2] See Pearson, *Creed*, pp. 6–7, 11–19. Flint, *Agnosticism*, pp. 542–551, exhibits the protestant view. He distinguishes (*a*) personal and human authority, which seeks to make itself unnecessary; (*b*) ecclesiastical, which is not ultimate; (*c*) biblical, which must determine all controversy. Catholic and protestant alike accept the supreme authority of Christ, and rest all derivative authority in its trustworthiness in exhibiting His teaching. See W. M. M'Pheeters in Hastings' *Dic. of Christ*, *s.v.* "Authority in Religion."

of all authority is divine, these two may be more conveniently described as intrinsic and derivative. Intrinsic authority, or divine authority in its immediate and direct exercise, is of course absolute and infallible. Reason cannot consistently contend against teaching that is recognized to come directly from God, or that is seen to be a true reproduction of such teaching. The very validity of reason itself is grounded in the infallibility of the divine mind, for reason has no other source than that mind. It is the finiteness of our participation in divine reason that makes us liable to err; and this limitation forbids our dependence upon our own reason in opposition to the perfect mind of God. Human reason should always be conformed to the mind of God, so far as divine revelation exhibits that mind to us.[1]

History shows that divine authority has not been made available directly and immediately to men in general, or to any except certain prophets and those who beheld and listened to the Word-Incarnate during His earthly ministry. Other men are dependent upon derivative authority for knowledge of supernatural revelation.[2]

[1] Cf. pp. 8, 10, above.

[2] Roman Catholic writers acknowledge that private revelations are on a lower level than those recorded in Scripture. Leo IX forbade their publication unless approved of by the Papal See. Moreover, papal approval is only concerned with their not being contrary to the faith. They may not be appealed to in order to settle controversies of faith. St. Augustine, *De Catech. Rud.*, ch. 6, will not concede to them the authority which he yields to biblical revelations. Cf. Card. Veron, *Regula Fidei*, cap. i. § 3; Salmon, *Infallibility*, Lec. XIII.

§ 2. The primary forms of such derivative authority are the ecclesiastical and biblical. These are divinely guaranteed, and are therefore infallible within their appointed range, and supremely determinative for Christian believers.

One of the chief reasons for which the Church was established and organized by our Lord was that she might receive and transmit to all subsequent generations the contents of His teaching, as set forth by His own word of mouth, as embodied in His self-manifestation, and as made clear to the Church's understanding by the guidance of the Holy Spirit.[1]

[1] The command to teach which was given by our Lord to the Church was coupled with promises which show its permanency. St. Matt. xxviii. 18–20. Cf. St. Matt. xxiv. 14. What was to be taught and contended for is described elsewhere as "the faith once for all delivered to the saints." St. Jude 3.

The following are some of the more important texts bearing either directly or indirectly on the grounds, nature, and limits of the teaching authority of the Church and her ministers: St. Matt. xvi. 16–18; xviii. 17; St. Mark xvi. 15; St. Luke x. 16; St. John xiv. 16, 17, 26; xvi. 13–15; xx. 21; Acts i. 2, 3; ii. 1–4, 14–36; vi. 2; xv. 28; xvi. 4; xx. 28; Rom. xii. 4–8; 1 Cor. iv. 1–2; xi, 23; xii. 28, 29; xv. 1–3; xvi. 16; 2 Cor. ii. 9–10; iv. 1–3; x. 8; Gal. i. 1, 8–12; ii. 6–11; Ephes. i. 22–23; iii. 2–11; iv. 11–16; Col. iii. 16; 1 Thess. v. 11, 12, 20, 21; 1 Tim. i. 1, 3, 4; iii. 15; vi. 3–5; vi. 20; 2 Tim. i. 13, 14; ii. 2; iv. 2; Tit. i. 1–3, 5, 7, 9, 13; ii. 15; iii. 10, 11; Heb. xiii. 7, 17; 1 St. Pet. v. 1–3; 2 St. Pet. iii. 2; 2 St. John 10; St. Jude 3.

On the whole subject of ecclesiastical authority see Palmer, *Of the Church*, Pt. III. ch. iii. v; Pt. IV; Darwell Stone, *Christian Church*, ch. xiii; Stanton, *Place of Authority*, ch. iv; Strong, *Authority in the Church;* Garbett, *Dogmatic Faith; Church Historical Society Lectures*, 2d Series; Pusey, *The Rule of Faith;* Field, *Of the Church*, esp. Bk. IV.; Laud, *Conference with Fisher;* E. T. Green, *The Church and the Sacraments*, ch. xiv.; McLaren, *Catholic Dogma;* Moehler,

The Sacred Scriptures, on the other hand, have been constituted as a divinely inspired library, provided for the edification of those who are taught by the Church. They were not the original source of divine truth to the Church, nor does the purpose of their inspiration displace the Church's teaching function. They imply that ecclesiastical teaching has been given to those for whom they are written, and that such teaching is Spirit-guided and true.[1]

The purpose of Scriptural inspiration is to afford teaching which will make men "wise unto salvation through faith which is in Jesus Christ," [2] that is, in the faith which the Church is divinely guided to teach and

Symbolism, Pt. I. ch. v.; Newman, *Lecs. on the Prophetical Office of the Church;* Wilberforce, *Prins. of Church Authority* (partly pro-Roman). Waterworth, *Faith of Catholics*, Vol. I. pp. 9–121, although Roman, gives a useful patristic catena. Cf. Cary, *Testimonies* to the *Doc. of the Ch. of Eng.*, in Art. xx; and Thorndike, *Prins. of Christian Truth*, I. xxviii. 16–26. An Anglican catena may be found in *Tracts for the Times*, lxxviii. The inability of protestant writers to understand the Church's claim is exhibited in Fairbairn's *Catholicism Roman and Anglican;* and the catholic position is more or less confused with the Roman position in Martineau's *Place of Authority*, and Salmon's *Infallibility of the Church*.

[1] The early disciples did not go to the Scriptures to discover Christian doctrines, but "searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so." Acts xvii. 11. Our Lord's commission was not to teach what was discovered in Scripture, but "whatsoever I have commanded you." St. Matt. xxviii. 2 . Believers are exhorted to follow the faith of "them that have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God." Heb. xiii. 7. It is the faith "delivered to the saints" for which believers must "contend." St. Jude 3. A bibliography of biblical inspiration is given on p. 195, note 3.

[2] 2 Tim. iii. 15.

define. This faith sums up the revelations that are recorded in the Scriptures, which are not "of any private interpretation" inconsistent therewith.[1]

The Scriptures do not set forth in formal definitions or systematic order the faith which they contain; but none the less they bear witness to its contents in manifold ways, and are exceedingly "profitable for teaching." [2] So complete is their teaching in fact that the Church does not require anything to be believed "as an article of the Faith," or to "be thought requisite or necessary to Salvation," which "is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby." [3] Thus the Church and

[1] 2 St. Pet. i. 20. This is because the Scriptures were written under the impulse of the Spirit — the Spirit who also guides the Church. The Spirit cannot contradict Himself.

[2] 2 Tim. iii. 16.

[3] *Thirty Nine Arts.*, VI. In Article XX., the authority of the Church in controversies of faith is said not to permit her "to enforce anything to be believed for necessity of Salvation" besides what is taught in Holy Writ. In Article VIII, the reason alleged for accepting the creeds is that "they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture."

The Council of Trent affirms, "Hanc veritatem et disciplinam [Christian faith and morals] contineri in libris scriptis, et sine scripto traditionibus." Sess. IV. It does not say "partly" in the Scriptures, but "in the Scriptures *and* in unwritten traditions," which is indisputable. The better class of Roman Catholic writers acknowledge that all saving doctrine is somehow contained in Scripture, although Scripture needs ecclesiastical interpretation. Du Perron, *Lettre à M. de Cherelles*, *Œuvres*, p. 843. Veron, *Regula Fidei*, cap. i. § 2; Wilhelm and Scannell, *Manual*, Bk. I. Pt. I. ch. iii. §§ 16–20.

The ancients were in agreement on this point. Thus St. Athanasius says, "The holy and divinely inspired Scriptures are sufficient of themselves, *αὐτάρκεις*, for the declaration of truth." *Contra Gentes*, i. 3; St. Cyril of Jerus., "Do not believe even me

the Scriptures are vitally related factors in the transmission of divinely revealed truth; and, while it is the function of the Church to teach and define the faith, the Scriptures enable us to confirm and illustrate what the Church teaches and defines.[1]

when I teach you these things, unless you receive the demonstration of what I announce to you from the divine Scriptures." *Catech.* I. iv. 17. St. Augustine, "Whatsoever ye hear [from the Scriptures] let that savour well unto you: whatsoever is without them refuse." *Sermo de Pastor.*, c. xi. Cf. *De Doctr. Christ.*, ii. 19, § 14. The presupposition of St. Vincent of Lerins' *Commonitorium* is that "the Canon of the Scripture is perfect, and most abundantly of itself sufficient for all things," although he proceeds to show that, owing to its profundity, it needs to be expounded "according to the rule of the ecclesiastical and catholic sense," ch. ii. Patristic catenas on this subject can be found in Pusey's *Eirenicon*, Vol. I., App. A; Cary's *Testimonies to the XXXIX Arts.*, pp. 97–112; Beveridge, *XXXIX Arts.*, VI; Browne, *XXXIX Arts.*, VI. Field, *Of the Church*, Bk. III. ch. ii. App., cites later writers. Palmer, *The Church*, Vol. II. p. 5. names Roman Catholic writers who take a contrary view. He treats of the whole subject, pp. 5–25. Cf. Gore, *Rom. Cath. Claims*, ch. iv.; Hooker, *Eccles. Polity*, I. xiv; Ottley, in *Church Hist. Soc. Lecs.*, 2d Series, pp. 17–21; Brown and Baylee, *Infallibility of Rome*, pp. 211–410.

[1] Salmon says that the formula, "the Church to teach, the Scriptures to prove," comes from Dr. Hawkins, sometime provost of Oriel College, Oxford. *Infallibility*, p. 125. It is made use of by Gore, in his *Mission of the Church;* and by Ottley, in *Ch. Hist. Soc. Lecs.* The idea, however, is ancient. But the phrase would be more adequate if expanded into, "The Church to teach and define, the Scriptures to confirm and illustrate."

Dependence upon the *joint* authority of Church and Scripture is the formal principle of Rome, although the decree of papal infallibility contains language which, in effect, displaces catholic authority. The Council of Trent, Sess. IV., declares that the Synod "receives and venerates . . . all the books of both the Old and the New Testament . . . and also the traditions . . . preserved by a continual succession

A partial analogy and illustration of the relation between ecclesiastical teaching and biblical study is to be seen in the respective parts of the definitive school-teaching of natural knowledge, and the verification thereof by a study of nature itself. The complex phenomena spread out before a biblical student exhibit the spiritual in much the same manner as physical phenomena manifest the natural, that is, in its proper objective setting, or in the concrete.[1]

§ 3. All other forms of authority in the sphere of divine truth are subordinate to the ecclesiastical and biblical; and the teaching of each requires to be tested, and accepted or rejected, according to its agreement or disagreement with ecclesiastical and biblical doctrine. They constitute so many human agencies, so much machinery, sanctioned and employed by the Church; but no one of them is competent to hold its own, except so far as it is successful in truly exhibiting the mind of the Catholic Church and the spiritual teaching of Holy Scripture. This distinction between the Church corporate and all machinery and agencies

in the Catholic Church." The Vatican Council reiterates this position, in Sess. III. cap. i.

The Eastern Church agrees. The Synod of Bethlehem (or Jerusalem), ch. vi (2nd decree of Dositheus), asserting the Scriptures "to be God-taught," says that "the witness also of the Catholic Church is . . . not of inferior authority to that of the divine Scriptures. For one and the same Holy Spirit being the Author of both, it is quite the same to be taught by the Scriptures and by the Catholic Church." Translated by Robertson, *Acts and Decrees of the Synod of Jerusalem*, pp. 112, 113.

[1] Cf. ch. vii. § 9, below, for fuller treatment of this analogy.

that may be employed in the dogmatic office is vital to a proper conception of ecclesiastical infallibility. That the Church will always be guided somehow to teach saving truth sufficiently to the faithful, we maintain. But her members are one and all fallible.

The Church frames her dogmatic definitions through the agency of the members of the episcopal order, and this has meant in practice by means of Councils.[1]

But parents are constituted by divine providence, and sponsors by ecclesiastical ordering,[2] to teach the young who are committed to their charge; and their teaching has a real authority within its limited sphere. But parents and sponsors have no authority to teach false doctrine, and their teaching ought therefore to be rejected if later study proves to its recipients its disagreement with the Church's mind.[3]

It should be noted at this point that the burden of proof lies always upon those who would reject the teaching of duly constituted authority, even when such

[1] See ch. iv. § 4, below, on Episcopal Authority; ch. v. on Councils and Popes.

[2] The Church exhorts sponsors in the Office of Baptism, "It is your parts and duties to see that *this Infant* be taught," etc. Cf. Ephes. vi. 4, on the authority of parents.

[3] The mediæval universities came to possess considerable human authority in doctrine, but only in relation to the control of university studies and privileges. See Palmer, *The Church*, Pt. IV. ch. xvii. Lacey, *Elements of Doctrine*, pp. 65–68, gives some useful remarks on the nature and extent of the authority of theologians. It is analogous in nature and extent to that of scientists generally.

authority is fallible.[1] The teachings of such authorities as we have named may not be repudiated by those to whom they are legitimately given, unless it can be shown clearly that they do not correctly represent the mind of the Catholic Church.

II. *Grounds of Ecclesiastical Authority*

§ 4. We have tried to show that the catholic view of ecclesiastical authority is credible, and consistent with the general methods of divine providence and with the requirements of sound reason. The acceptance of such authority is indeed grounded partly in considerations drawn from natural experience and reflection.

(*a*) It is grounded in social relations; for religion is not a purely private affair, but involves corporate functions and manifold lines of co-operation, co-operation that cannot attain its proper development except on the basis of a consensus of ideas, dependent in turn upon the acceptance of leadership and authoritative teaching. These conditions are best fulfilled by a general acceptance of the authority of a corporate body or *ecclesia*, to which is conceded the control of religious doctrine as well as of corporate activities.[2]

[1] Partly because an implicit basis of such authority is the teacher's presumed superiority of knowledge; and partly because the content of official teaching is, presumably at least, determined by higher and more secure authority. These presumptions are valid in each several case provisionally at least, and until shown to be unwarranted. Waterworth, *Faith of Catholics*, Vol. I., pp. 358–393, gives a patristic catena on private judgment.

[2] Cf. ch. i. § 5, above; and pp. 56, 57. See also Stanton, *Place of Authority*, pp. 166–167.

(*b*) It is natural to defer in any sphere of truth to the authority of those who have chiefly concerned themselves with the subject-matter of the inquiry, that is of experts. But it is in the Church that spiritual experts [1] are to be found, and the mind and judgment of the Church is the corporate expression of the conclusions of such experts, of their consensus in fundamental doctrines pertaining to salvation.[2] This consensus is facilitated and protected from unintelligent and unspiritual vagaries by the peculiar advantages of spiritual knowledge which the corporate life and atmosphere of the Church, and its educative institutions and customs, afford.

(*c*) The consensus which is crystallized in ecclesiastical teaching has a weight and authority analogous to the consent of mankind in matters of general concern.[3] It is the consent of the generality of those who are competent to arrive at conclusions in the sphere of spiritual things. St. Augustine's dictum, *Securus judicat orbis terrarum*, although often diverted from its

[1] Spiritual experts are those who devote themselves to spiritual things in a spiritual manner, for no other method is scientific in the spiritual sphere. This means that only the saints can become spiritual experts; and the Church is the true home of the saints.

[2] It is, of course, more than this. The *ecclesia docens* is not merely the correlative of the *ecclesia discens*, but a corporate teacher, divinely appointed and peculiarly assisted of God in the task of proclaiming to successive generations the faith once for all delivered, without change of its substance. But this does not militate against our argument.

[3] Cicero said long ago, *De Natura Deorum*, I. xvii, "that opinion respecting which there is a general agreement in universal nature must infallibly be true." Seneca expresses a similar view. *Epis.* 117. Cf. Wilberforce, *Prins. of Church Authority*, p. 7.

original meaning and application,[1] expresses an undoubted truth, that insular opposition to the common mind of all who are in a position to judge intelligently is not usually [2] capable of rational defence.

(*d*) Finally, the judgment of the existing Catholic Church touching doctrine represents a survival of the fittest—of what has stood the test of time and of changing conditions, conditions made exceedingly diverse by the theological warfare that schism has accentuated and perpetuated. Doctrines which, without essential alteration, are capable of adjustment to the mutations of nineteen centuries of world-wide progress, thought, and polemic seem to belong to the category of things fundamental and permanent. But what we have described as a survival of doctrine is in its formal aspect nothing else than the existing authoritative or dogmatic teaching of the Catholic Church in its ecumenical capacity. No other body of opinion has held its own without subversion through so many changes and so many ages, and with so large a consensus of intelligent and well-tried judgment. To reject the authority of catholic dogma is to be blind to the significance of such a unique survival.

[1] St. Augustine was showing the insularity and presumption of the Donatists in setting themselves against the whole catholic world. He was not concerned with the claims of the Papal See.

[2] We say "not usually," for in matters of progressive knowledge, even a single individual may discover good reasons for dissenting from universal judgment. The case is otherwise, however, with a faith which has been revealed and preserved in manners that make the nature of its contents always verifiable.

§ 5. But we do not accept the Church's claim to teach with final authority in things pertaining to God on natural grounds merely. Were such grounds wholly wanting, we should indeed find our acceptance of ecclesiastical authority more difficult to justify, for God is not wont to stultify the natural order in His arrangements. But the authority claimed by the Church belongs to the supernatural order, as well as to the natural, and requires for its vindication positive evidence that it has divine warrant and guarantee. If the Church requires us to listen to her as a messenger from God, she ought to be able to exhibit sufficient credentials; and our responsibility to be guided always by truth, especially in matters pertaining to eternal life, requires that we should demand such credentials.[1]

The Church is able to meet this demand (*a*) by producing her commission from God to make disciples of all nations; (*b*) by evidence that she is guided by the Holy Spirit into all the truth which she is commissioned

[1] The habit of relying over much on *a priori* considerations is a notable characteristic of arguments in behalf of papal infallibility. But Roman writers do not deny the necessity of credentials. McNabb, *Infallibility*, p. 3, says, "No doctrine of the infallibility of the Church can be separated from the Founder's plan of the Church; nor, if a man disputes the nature of that plan, can he be brought to a better mind except by an appeal to the Book." On p. 51, he says that opponents of his thesis "should not rest on metaphysical or psychological grounds of impossibility, but on historical grounds, since the question of the appointed organ is a matter of history, not of philosophy. . . . We must see what Christ our Lord appointed; and there the matter ends."

to teach; and (*c*) by establishing her own interior relation to the eternal Word of Truth, a relation which is grounded in the fact that she is the mystical body of Christ.

§ 6. In establishing the validity of her claim to teach with authority, the Church makes use of evidence taken from Holy Scripture. This fact has led some to accuse her of reasoning in a circle. A believer is often addressed somewhat as follows: "You ask us to accept the teaching authority of the Church because you say it can be proved by the Bible; and then when we ask why we should accept the teaching of the Bible, you answer that we must accept the teaching of the Bible because the Church has authenticated it to us as the infallible Word of God. Which then is the real basis? You cannot rationally prove A by B and and then prove B by A." [1]

Such a criticism is based on misapprehension. In the first place, when we cite the Bible to establish the Church's claim we do not necessarily appeal to the divine authority of the Bible, but to certain documents, in so far as they are trustworthy historical documents,

[1] Salmon, *Infallibility*, pp. 53–55, raises this objection as against attempts to prove papal infallibility from Scripture. But he raises it in a form that is valid, if valid at all, against the use of Scripture to prove ecclesiastical authority. He gives the Roman Catholic Bishop Clifford's reply, and his own rejoinder, pp. 55–61. Bishop Clifford's line is substantially that taken immediately below. It is valid for ecclesiastical authority, but not for papal claims; for it cannot be proved from New Testament documents, in their historical aspect, or any other, that our Lord appointed the Papal See to wield the authority claimed in the Vatican decree.

and irrespectively of any higher claim. Whether the Bible is the Word of God or not, the Gospels have been shown to be trustworthy human sources of knowledge touching the life and utterances of Jesus Christ. When we examine them in that light, we obtain sufficient historical evidence as to the character, achievements and claims of the Person with whom they are concerned, to warrant the conclusion that His claims are valid, that He taught and acted with inherent divine authority, and that, in the exercise of such authority, He gave the commission on which the teaching authority of the Church is based. The sequence of argument, therefore, is (*a*) the historical facts which establish the divine authority of Jesus Christ; (*b*) further historical evidence that He employed His authority to commission the Church which He Himself established to make disciples of all nations; (*c*) the Church's teaching that the documents thus relied upon for historical evidence are not only what criticism proves them to be, generally trustworthy as historical narratives, but also divinely inspired — the Word of God.[1]

[1] Gore, in *Lux Mundi*, pp. 340–341, argues that the basis of the Church's teaching is historical. The Scriptures are used as historical documents prior to the question of their inspiration, which comes later in thought. Moberly in the same volume, grounds ecclesiastical authority in the fact of the Incarnation — a somewhat parallel but wider line of argument. Palmer, *The Church*, Vol. II. p. 84, takes a less valid line, although more congenial to those who lean simply on Scripture. He grounds biblical authority in the consent of competent believers, and the authority of the Church in the inspired teaching of Scripture. The difficulty here lies in the fact that

There is also a second reply. If we accept Christianity at all — the historic system that was established by our Lord and His apostles — we are obliged to recognize that ecclesiastical and biblical authority constitute in that religion joint factors in an organic system of divine teaching. As such they are mutually related, and mutually corroborative. The authority of each is from God, and it is misleading to place either one higher than the other. It is *the manner in which they agree*, in matters wherein agreement, unless supernaturally secured, would be antecedently unlikely, that constitutes immediate evidence to us that both are of divine appointment and possess a derivative divine authority.[1]

ecclesiastical authority was claimed and submitted to prior to the writing of the New Testament, and the New Testament presupposes even more than it asserts ecclesiastical authority. In short, its value for proof is historical rather than formal. Cf. Stanton, *Place of Authority*, pp. 66–68; Wilberforce, *Prins. of Authority*, pp. 10–25. The Roman Schanz, *Christian Apology*, Vol. III., Pref. pp. xvi., xvii., quoted by Flint, *Agnosticism*, p. 545, says: "A man must hold before he can accept with safety the authority of the Church these seven preliminary truths — the existence of God, the possibility of revelation, the fact of revelation, the history of the Old Testament as substantially genuine, the substantially authentic character of the New Testament, the Deity of Christ, the institution of an enduring Apostolate. A man must be in reason satisfied about these points . . . unless, indeed, he clearly sees a way [other than ecclesiastical] of establishing the Divine authority of the New Testament Scriptures."

[1] The catholic believer depends upon the joint authority of Church and Scripture. These two may be considered separately, but they cannot be set in antithesis, as though mutually opposed or independent authorities, without undermining the whole Christian system.

§ 7. (*a*) Bearing in mind these general considerations as to the sequence of evidences for ecclesiastical and biblical authority, we reckon as the primary and formal ground of ecclesiastical authority the fact that the Church was established in order to gather in all mankind and to make disciples of all nations, "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever" the Lord commanded. Moreover, we learn from the promise of Christ, that He would be with His Church "always, even unto the end of the world," that her teaching office, thus conferred, is perpetual.[1] And, while in this argument we depend primarily upon the formal commission above described, which is a fact of history, we find the divinely instituted teaching function of the Church taken for granted in all the New Testament narratives as well as in many utterances of the contemporaries of our Lord which are preserved in that literature.[2]

It should be noticed that the commission of the Son of God to His Church establishes her teaching authority, whether she is endowed with infallibility or not. That is, we are under obligation to accept her authority as teacher, within the terms of her commission, because it is divinely appointed; and we are warranted in believing that, when we do so, we shall not

[1] St. Matt. xxviii. 18–20.

[2] For biblical references illustrating this see p. 65, note 1, above. To these may be added the sevenfold exhortation, "Let him hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches." Rev. ii. 7, 11, 17, 29; iii. 6, 13, 22. The Spirit teaches the Church first, and, through her, believers.

be held accountable in God's sight for errors that are due to our obedience to His own arrangements.

§ 8. (*b*) Still making use of the New Testament documents as historical sources, we discover a second basis of the Church's teaching authority in the promise made by our Lord that the Holy Spirit should be with His Church to guide her into all the truth which she was authorized to teach;[1] and the further promise that the gates of hades should not prevail against her.[2]

So we find that the apostles were accustomed to base their teaching upon the fact of its having been revealed to them by the Spirit.[3] And when the Church assembled in Council, its decrees were declared to define what "seemed good to the Holy Ghost."[4]

Nor may we limit the efficiency of this guidance to the apostolic age. It is true that the apostles enjoyed a special inspiration that enabled them to add to the written Word of God. But it is impossible to accept

[1] St. John xiv. 26. "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My Name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." St. John xvi. 12, 13. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all the truth." Cf. St. John xiv. 16, 17. Also St. Matt. x. 20; St. Mark xiii. 11; St. Luke xii. 12; Acts ii. 4; v. 32; vii. 51; xv. 8; 1 Cor. ii. 4, 10–14; xii. 4–11; Ephes. iii. 5; 1 Thess. i. 15; iv. 8; 2 Tim. i. 14; Heb. x. 15; 1 St. John ii. 20; iii. 24; v. 6; Rev. ii. 7 (and parallels). These texts illustrate the ways in which the Spirit guides the Church and its members.

[2] St. Matt. xvi. 18.

[3] For an example, see 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11.

[4] Acts xv. 28.

our Lord's promise to be with His Church to the end of the world while putting a term to the fulfilment of His promise that the Holy Ghost should guide His Church into all the truth. The change that took place after the death of the apostles was simply this, that a guidance which had included a peculiar inspiration of individual teachers was henceforth exercised in preserving in the corporate mind and consciousness of the Catholic Church the truths which the apostles had proclaimed.[1]

§ 9. (*c*) A third basis of the Church's teaching authority is the interior relation which exists between the Church as a corporate entity and her Head,[2] who is the Truth, as well as the Way and the Life.[3] This relation is of the essence of the Church, for she is the Body of Christ by nature;[4] so that to be incorporated into the Church is to become a member of Christ, "of His body"[5] as St. Paul expresses it. By virtue of this relation the Church is declared to be "the fulness of Him [Christ] that filleth all in all."[6]

[1] See McLaren, *Catholic Dogma*, chh. vii., viii.; Wilberforce, *Prins. of Authority*, pp. 38–43.

[2] St. Matt. xxiii. 8, 10; St. John xv. 1–8; 1 Cor. xi. 3; Ephes. i. 10, 22; ii. 20–22; iv. 15; v. 23–32; Col. i. 13; ii. 19; iii. 11; Heb. iii. 6.

[3] St. John xiv. 6. Cf. i. 14, 17.

[4] Rom. xii. 5; 1 Cor. xii. 12–27; Ephes. i. 22–23; iv. 4–6, 13, 16. It is impossible to treat this description of the Church as metaphorical. The term "Body of Christ" is indeed inadequate and symbolic, but the repeated use of it shows that it is the most literal description of the inner nature of the Church that human language can supply; and no thoughtful believer is likely to press it in a naturalistic sense.

[5] Ephes. v. 30.

[6] Ephes. i. 23.

St. Paul emphasizes explicitly the truth that the relation of individual Christians to their Head — who is described by St. John as the Light of the world[1] — is not only social but organic.[2] The duty of "endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit" is grounded in the fact that "there is one body, and one Spirit," for those who are "called in one hope"; and our possession of "One Lord, one faith," and of the gift of "grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ," [3] is also dependent upon our membership in the body corporate. The ministry has for its divine purpose the "building up of the body of Christ; till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God . . . that we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine, . . . but speaking truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him, which is the Head, even Christ; from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love." It is this corporate relation to Christ in the Church, as thus significantly expounded, that constitutes the premise and warrant of St. Paul's exhortation that immediately follows, "that ye no longer walk as the Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, being darkened in their understanding," etc.[4]

[1] St. John i. 4, 9; viii. 12; ix. 5; Rev. xxi. 23.
[2] Ephes. v. 14. [3] Ephes. v. 3–7.
[4] Ephes. iv. 11–18. R. V.

It is true that St. Paul has in view a richer relation to Christ than that between learners and their teacher; but the thought is obviously included and enforced that the relation to the Word-incarnate which guarantees the possibility of our assimilating the truths by which we must live is a corporate one, based upon the fact that the Church is the body of Christ.[1]

III. *Ecclesiastical Infallibility*

§ 10. Our consideration of the grounds of ecclesiastical authority enables us to make important deductions as to its characteristics and limits, and as to the practical results of accepting it. The futility of objecting to the finality of ecclesiastical authority on the plea that it is human and liable to err becomes apparent. The Church's authority is not merely human. It is derivatively divine; for it is the authority not simply of a multitude of human individuals, collectively considered, but of a corporate body that is under supernatural guidance and protection. It is, in fact, the authority of Christ and His Holy Spirit, mediated through a Church that is by nature the body of Christ, "the fulness of Him that filleth all in all."[2] Such is at once the reason for our belief in ecclesiastical infallibility, and the principle by which to dissociate such infallibility from certain mechanical, unwarranted, and

[1] See on this subject McLaren, *Catholic Dogma*, ch. vi.; Wilberforce, *Prins. of Church Authority*, pp. 28–33; Moberly, *Admin. of the Holy Spirit*, Lecs. II.–IV., esp. pp. 46 *et seq.* Cf. § 12, below.

[2] Ephes. i. 23.

repellant views with which it has sometimes been identified.[1]

Ecclesiastical infallibility means, briefly speaking, that no truly ecumenical teaching of the Catholic Church as to what is necessary to be believed, or essential to be practised, can be erroneous. In the following sections, however, we shall endeavour to show that this infallibility is not intrinsic but derivative, not formal but practical, and to be defined in terms of a divinely promised and providentially secured result, rather than in those of a mechanical system. It does not extend to every subject-matter of teaching, or

[1] The term infallibility, as applied to the Church, has come to stand with many for a *Deus ex machina*, which, under external conditions susceptible of precise definition beforehand, will inevitably issue self-interpreting *formulæ*, such as will not only close forever the questions with which they deal, but will produce infallible certainty and absolute peace of mind in all those who accept the authority of the Church in good faith. So wide-spread and inveterate is this misconception that we should be glad to abandon the term, if it were possible to find a suitable substitute and avoid the still graver misapprehension that such substitution would cause. But the truth for which the term stands in catholic theology is a vital one; and our responsibility for maintaining it constrains us to explain rather than abandon the term by which it has been signified by orthodox writers generally. That truth, stated practically and untechnically, is the absolute security that Christ will find ways of redeeming His promise of Spirit-guidance in and through the Church — a guidance which can never cease to be sufficient for the faithful. It is Christ's infallibility that is at issue; and the Church is called infallible simply and only because He has promised to teach us by means of His Church. Our faith is grounded in divine resourcefulness, not in *a priori* definitions of its formal methods.

The opinions of representative Anglicans are given, with a general discussion of the finality of universal ecclesiastical judgments, by

beyond the limits of the saving truths once for all revealed. It is possessed by the corporate *ecclesia* as a whole, not by any particular agents or machinery that may be employed in teaching. The will of the Holy Spirit, which is made known to us only by the event, determines the conditions and methods of the Church's infallible dogmatizing, rather than any *a priori* considerations of ours. Finally, the probation of faith is not subverted by ecclesiastical infallibility, and catholic believers are neither deprived of the right nor relieved of the obligation of endeavouring to lay hold of truth by the exercise of enlightened reason.

Palmer, *The Church*, Pt. IV. ch. iv. He well says, Vol. II. pp. 123, 124, "Whatever various modes of treating the authority of the Church there may have been, I believe that scarcely any Christian writer can be found, who has ventured actually to maintain that the judgment of *the universal Church, freely and deliberately given, with the apparent use of all means*, might in fact be heretical and contrary to the Gospel." A fact which astonishes Salmon (*Infallibility*, p. 274) — that even protestants think that to admit the Church's claim at all is to admit her infallibility — illustrates the impossibility of dissociating ecclesiastical authority, as maintained historically, from the doctrine we are maintaining. Collins, in *Ch. Hist. Soc. Lecs.*, 2nd Series, pp. 76–89, gives a valuable statement. Acknowledging that erroneous decisions may be and have been made in the name of the Church, he maintains that the Church, as distinguished from her agents, "is infallible, not because of her doctors and teachers, her councils and her bishops, but because . . . her Lord will not suffer her to fail . . . in spite of her members, just as she is *One* in spite of all our disunions, and *Holy* in spite of all our sins; *Catholic* in spite of all our narrowness and sectarianism, and *Apostolic* in spite of all our unapostolic spirit." Salmon's *Infallibility of the Church* contains much that is valuable and suggestive, but is seriously vitiated by the misconception of the doctrine of ecclesiastical infallibility which we are striving to avoid.

§ 11. The Church's infallibility is not intrinsic, strictly speaking, but derivative. That is, it owes its existence, continuance, methods, and extent to divine overruling and guidance. The Church is constituted and commissioned to teach what has been revealed and commanded by her Lord. The guidance of the Spirit which is promised to her pertains to spiritual things only, and it is limited to the sphere of revealed truth and the dispensation of life which our Lord has committed to her to proclaim, preserve, and apply. The Church is not dehumanized; nor is she endowed with omniscience in any sphere, or with infallibility outside the sphere appointed. We know this not merely because of the limitation of our Lord's commission and promise, but because subsequent history gives repeated evidence that the Church has to wait on scientific scholarship and practical experience for knowledge in other matters.[1] Her authority is that of a witness to certain truths and principles which she received in apostolic days. She is not an organ of new revelations,[2] nor does she enjoy any peculiar protection

[1] It was so with the Copernican theory, which held its own in spite of the ecclesiastical condemnation of Galileo for maintaining it. Salmon tells the story, in *Infallibility*, pp. 230 *et seq.*

[2] Collins, in *Ch. Hist. Soc. Lecs.*, pp. 55–67. Even the Vatican Council, Constit. I. ch. iv., says that the Roman Pontiffs "defined as to be held those things which . . . they had recognized as conformable with the Sacred Scriptures and apostolic traditions. For the Holy Spirit was not promised . . . that by His revelation they might make known new doctrine, but that by His assistance they might inviolably keep and faithfully expound the revelation or deposit of faith delivered through the apostles."

or immunity from error in matters not necessary to be believed or practised for salvation.[1] What is guaranteed by the Lord's commission and promise is this: that the ecumenical teaching of the Catholic Church will never be permitted to misrepresent the faith once for all delivered to the saints. The Church's mind and judgment, rightly understood, can always be accepted implicitly and followed with unique safety by those who seek to enter into the mind of Christ and attain to life eternal.[2]

§ 12. The authority of the Church in doctrine is ultimately a corporate authority, and such infallibility as the Church enjoys pertains to the whole corporate body. The illumination which is given by the Spirit to the Church is indeed shared in by her members, but in unequal measures and results. And no member or collection of members, whether private or official, can either think fully or live correctly according to the mind of Christ apart from, or in schismatic opposition to, the body corporate, which is the body of Christ. All the members of the body are mutually dependent. This appears clearly in the first Epistle to the Corin-

[1] Thus the Church of pentecostal days was not guided to correct the belief of her members that the second advent of Christ was immediately impending.

[2] On the limited sphere of the Church's infallibility, and the possibility of general error in the Church touching extraneous matters, see Palmer, *The Church*, Pt. IV. ch. vi. Cf. Laud's *Conference with Fisher*, §§ xxi. pp. 154–158; § xxv. pp. 179–180 (Anglo-Cath. Liby.); Wilberforce, *Prins. of Church Authority*, pp. 33, 34; Gore, *Rom. Cath. Claims*, ch. iii.

thians.[1] And even the fact that some of the members are constituted apostles, prophets, or teachers[2] does not invalidate this principle. These ministers of Christ are also organs of the body — not external agents.

The mind in the Church, therefore, which constitutes the norm of Christian belief, is the corporate mind. It is not a mere outcome of collective agreement between individuals, or a majority of them. Historically such agreement is at times difficult to verify. It is the mind that is controlled by the Spirit, taught by the Head, and participated in by the members in diverse measures and manners, according to the gifts which are imparted to each severally by the Spirit.[3]

So it is that bishops in Council may fail to express the corporate mind; in which case the failure becomes manifest in due season. Particular Churches and sees may err.[4] None are exempt from the possibility of failure

The Vatican Council defines the "infallibility with which the divine Redeemer willed that His Church should be endowed" as limited to "defining doctrine regarding faith and morals." Constit. I. cap. iv.

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 4–31.

[2] 1 Cor. xii. 28. Cf. Ephes. iv. 11.

[3] On the corporate nature of ecclesiastical authority see Collins, in *Ch. Hist. Soc. Lecs.*, 2nd Series, pp. 87–92; Moberly, *Admin. of the Holy Spirit*, Lecs. II.–IV. Cf. § 9, above.

[4] See *Arts. of Religion*, XIX., XXI. We treat of General Councils in ch. v. Pt. I. below. Protestant writers mistakenly regard the errors of Councils as proofs of ecclesiastical fallibility, as though a General Council were the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church is the corporate totality of that visible body of which Christ is the Head, the Holy Ghost the illuminating Spirit, the hierarchy the delegated ministry, and the baptized the members. See on this, Pearson, *Creed*, IX. pp. 610–617; Darwell Stone, *Outlines of Dogma*, note 34.

to be controlled by the one Spirit and by the mind of the catholic body corporate. But in manners determined by the Head and by the Spirit who illuminates the body, the corporate life which is centred in Christ continues ever to enlighten, sufficiently for their several vocations, those members of the body who are faithful to the Church's ways and seek thus to walk according to the Spirit.

This does not mean that the Church's teaching authority is without normal means of expressing itself determinately. The body possesses organs, and it is the divinely appointed office of certain of the Church's officers to formulate and publish the mind of the Church to her faithful members.[1] But the members of the hierarchy do not possess a separate infallibility of their own, apart from the body at large, or one which guarantees their invariable success in exhibiting the catholic mind.

§ 13. If infallibility may not rightly be attributed to separate parts of the Church or to her ministers apart from the corporate *ecclesia*, neither have we any revealed warrant for connecting its exhibition invariably with any particular circumstances or methods of dogmatizing. The Church's voice is heard in many ways; and the faithful never depend absolutely upon any one of them for saving knowledge of what she is commissioned

[1] Acts xx. 28; 1 Cor. iv. 1; 2 Cor. v. 20; Ephes. iv. 11–16; 1 Thess. v. 12; 2 Tim. iv. 1–5; Heb. xiii. 7, 17. Cf. Mal. ii. 7. The limitation of ministerial authority appears in 1 Cor. iv. 2: "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful"; and in 2 Cor. i. 24: "Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand."

to teach.[1] At all events, it is the will of the Spirit, made known only by the event, that determines when, how, and to what extent, the Church will be enabled to define the contents of her message in formal or dogmatic terms of ecumenical and permanent authority.[2]

Forgetfulness of this has caused much difficulty. Attempts to define in a formal, mechanical, and *a priori* way the precise external methods and *criteria* of the Church's infallible pronouncements have resulted in caricature, and have caused unnecessary doubts as to the existence of any ecclesiastical infallibility whatsoever. It needs, therefore, to be emphasized again and again, that, while we have ample warrant in Holy Scripture for being assured that the Church's working system, considered as a whole, will somehow be made by the Spirit to guide loyal souls aright, we have no basis of previous certainty that any particular attempt of the Church's ministers to define her teaching in dogmatic terms will succeed. And it follows that, although the official utterances of the hierarchy have real authority, and are to be received loyally by the faithful under normal circumstances, they may not be permitted to retain their authority when proved to be contrary to the mind of the Catholic Church touching

[1] See below, ch. iv. §§ 1, 7.

[2] The corporate and mysterious nature of the Spirit's guidance is well exhibited in McLaren's *Catholic Dogma*, pp. 55–58. He says: "The result . . . of the coming [of the Spirit] was distinctly announced, but there was entire silence as to its *modus*." "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth." St. John iii. 8.

necessary doctrine. The burden of proof in such cases lies, of course, with those who dispute such utterances. The infallibility of the Church, in brief, is not so much formal as practical. It guarantees that those who are really faithful to the Church's ways will always be enabled thus, and not otherwise, to enter sufficiently into the knowledge of saving truth.[1]

§ 14. We now come to a consideration of the objections raised against ecclesiastical infallibility — that is, against "the doctrine that the Church, as a whole, by reason of the indwelling divine Spirit, is rendered inerrant in matters of faith and teaching," which means in the sphere of revealed and saving truth.[2] And first

[1] Ecclesiastical infallibility, if real, must be consistent in its working with the facts of history, which prove that at times much important error and confusion have existed in the Church. Such was notably the case during the Arian conflict. Bossuet did not exceed the apparent teaching of Church history when he said that that only is to be held impossible in the Church which, if it occurs, will destroy every safeguard for the truth. *Defensio Declar. Cleri Gallicani*, Lib. X. c. 36, cited by Palmer. See on the whole subject Palmer, *The Church*, Pt. IV. ch. vi. He says, "The promise of Christ to His Church did not extend to total exemption from error, but to a preservation of *the truth revealed by Himself*, pure and inviolate." Cf. Field, *The Church*, Bk. III. ch. x.

[2] We quote from Baldwin, *Dic. of Philos.*, *s. v.*, "Infallibility" — a detached witness, surely — to show how limited after all the Church's claim is. It is not one of inherent or human capacity, but of promised guidance and overruling from above, in the very limited sphere of teaching faithfully what has been received. Salmon, *Infallibility*, espec. ch. xv., who marshals the objections most comprehensively, has always in mind either the theory of papal infallibility or the Gallican view, stated in mechanical terms that we cannot acknowledge to be correct. Thus, pp. 274–275, he betrays the conviction that, if

in order come the objections to the possibility and to the alleged grounds of such infallibility.

(*a*) There is the objection that infallibility, considered as an effect, transcends the agencies employed. The Church consists of fallible men, and a multiplication of fallibles cannot produce an infallible.[1] The answer is not far to seek. The Church is no mere collection of fallible men, but also the body of Christ, energized and guided by the Spirit. In brief, ecclesiastical infallibility is the result of supernatural causation, although exhibited in the sphere of what is, apart from divine grace and guidance, purely natural and human. The objection is *a priori*, and cannot hold, unless the

we grant that, although the Church must somehow preserve the faith in its essence, yet may err otherwise and permit the faith to be encrusted with speculative vagaries, we surrender ecclesiastical infallibility. We do nothing of the kind, for such infallibility is not claimed except for the preservation of the faith in its essence. If Salmon concedes that she must preserve that faith, he concedes the only doctrine of ecclesiastical infallibility that has ecumenical authority, and all that we are defending. On pp. 115–116, he illustrates ecclesiastical authority by a clock, which we have to consult, but which we also have to correct and regulate. The modern electric clock would be a better illustration, although its mechanical implications are not to be pressed. Such a clock is neither self-regulating nor in need of correction by those who consult it, but is kept right by being connected dynamically with a central regulator. So the Church is neither self-sufficient nor subject to our correction, but is guided from a divine centre by the Holy Spirit. It should be added that we trust an electric clock within the limited sphere of keeping time. Similarly we trust the Church within her appointed function of keeping the faith.

[1] See Martineau, *Seat of Authority*, pp. 66–68. "Such as the natures are, separately taken, such will be the collective sum: no crowd of pigmies can add themselves up into a God."

evidence of the Church's supernatural constitution and guidance can be overthrown.[1]

(*b*) It is urged that the argument by which ecclesiastical infallibility is supported is circular. The Scriptures are depended upon to prove such infallibility, and when a reason is demanded for accepting the finality of biblical teaching we are told that the infallible teaching of the Church assures us of this. Epitomizing a reply already made to this objection as raised against ecclesiastical authority in general,[2] our contention is that in the first instance we appeal to Scripture only as a trustworthy record of facts. It is the nature of the facts that constitutes the basis of our assurance of ecclesiastical authority and infallibility. The doctrine of biblical inspiration is not a link in this argument, but belongs to a later stage in thought.

(*c*) A third objection is that we depend necessarily on private and fallible judgment in believing that the Church is infallible, for all our beliefs, so far as ours,

[1] Liberal writers generally deny the supernatural origin and nature of the Church and its teaching hierarchy. Cf. Sabatier, *Religions of Authority*, pp. 19–39. *Per contra*, McLaren says, *Catholic Dogma*, p. 116, "That which, in the order of nature, is a strong probability, associated with a suggestion of uncertainty, becomes, however, an infallible certainty in the order of grace. The ordinary perceptions of the universal mind, in their natural play and development, are wonderfully true to truth, but in the realm of revealed truth they have the added gift of a superintending Divine Power whose specific function it is . . . to take of the things that pertain to this higher sphere and show them unto the Church." We have considered the supernatural in *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. ii.

[2] See above, § 6 of this chapter.

are the outcome of our own thinking.[1] This objection is based upon the fallacy of making the nature of the conclusion proved nullify the value of the proof. The proof in this case is what is called probable; and its force is estimated, as is the force of all other arguments whatsoever, by human judgment. That the proof is sufficient we believe, and to refuse to have our judgment determined by it is to repudiate the fundamental laws of reason. The question is, do we believe rationally in ecclesiastical infallibility? If so, the fallibility of our beliefs does not justify the abandonment of this belief.[2]

A second reply can be made to the objection which we are considering. It proves too much. All Christian theists acknowledge the infallibility of God, and the absolute truth of any teaching which is known to come from Him. But all human certainty is fallible, so that our certainty touching divine infallibility is fallible. Is divine infallibility to be rejected, therefore? It certainly is, if the objection before us is valid. It may be that some are led by the catholic arguments which are intended to show human helplessness apart from the Church to distrust men's success

[1] Salmon, *Infallibility*, pp. 47–49, 79, 279. Cf. pp. 57 *et seq.* on what he supposes to be the futility of accepting authority as infallible on the basis of merely probable argument.

[2] It is a fact, of course, that believers do ultimately attain a certainty which the arguments on which it is supposedly based do not fully account for. But the "certainty of faith" is the fruit of grace, and cannot be exhibited in all its grounds to the unbelieving. Here rational opinion, however, that the Church is infallible comes within the pertinence of Butler's indisputable contention, that "probability is a very guide of life." Cf. Palmer, *The Church*, Vol. II. pp. 48–53.

in finding the Church they need;[1] if so, their logic points to theological agnosticism, based upon man's mental helplessness apart from God.

§ 15. We come to objections based upon a consideration of the supposed results of ecclesiastical infallibility.

(*d*) It is said that an acceptance of ecclesiastical infallibility involves blind submission, a suppression of reason and an abdication of the right to verify ecclesiastical teaching by the Scriptures and by experience.[2] Our reply is that it involves nothing of the kind. The purpose of the Church's divine guidance, and consequent infallibility within its sphere, is to secure that the truth shall be taught. This does not, however, guarantee infallible certainty on the part of believers; and it is quite erroneous to suppose that the Church exacts blind submission to her teaching, without regard to men's personal assurance of its truth. On the contrary, she welcomes every effort of her children to verify her doctrine, whether by Scripture or by other means, in order that their faith may be fortified and made secure. Moreover, assuming that the believer is absolutely certain as to the Church's infallibility, and free from doubt as to the precise content of her ecumenical doctrine, he will still have need to exercise his reason along the usual lines of verification. The removal of uncertainty is not the only motive and result of verification of authoritative teaching. There is also the

[1] Such is Salmon's plea, *Infallibility*, p. 55.

[2] See Salmon, *Infallibility*, pp. 116–124.

deepening, enriching, and broadening of one's understanding of truth in its relations, bearings, and applications. The Church's authority is not prejudiced by an intelligent assimilation of her teaching, but is immensely fortified before the world when her disciples are found to be competent to give reasons for the hope that she has taught them to cherish. It is true, as Salmon says,[1] that the Church's teaching is more like that of a medical lecturer, who expects his listeners to verify for themselves what he says, than like that of a physician, to whose instructions his patients submit without question. But the difference does not lie in the fallibility of one authority and the infallibility of the other. It lies in the respective ends in view. The medical lecturer challenges verification because he seeks to make masters of medicine, and his possession of infallibility would not reduce the necessity of such a method for such an end.[2] So the Church seeks to make masters of spiritual knowledge. The inference is obvious. She welcomes on the part of her disciples the free investigation that is necessary to such an end.[3]

[1] *Infallibility*, pp. 51, 52, 116.

[2] The implication of Salmon, echoed by liberal writers, is that the task of authority should be to render itself useless by the success of its work in equipping self-sufficient scholars. So far as this is true, it applies only to individual pupils, and to spheres within which men do not easily lose hold upon what they have learned, as they do in spiritual matters. An authority charged with teaching every generation can, of course, never become useless or antiquated.

[3] We do not deny that prelates and popes have often shown an intolerance of critical scholarship that is deplorable. But in this they fail to represent the ecumenical mind.

(*e*) It is objected again that the theory of ecclesiastical infallibility is the result of a purely *a priori* and mistaken notion that God must somehow, if He wills to save mankind, put us in possession of an easy means of arriving at infallible certainty touching truths necessary to be believed for salvation. Therefore the Church is viewed as a ready oracle, an infallible guide for the absolute determination of all troublesome questions.[1]

We do not deny that ecclesiastical authority has sometimes been maintained in ways that suggest such an assumption, which indeed vitiates many a defence of papal claims. But ecclesiastical infallibility, rightly understood, does not necessarily involve the idea of infallible guidance, which ought to be distinguished clearly from infallible authority. As we have said above, the purpose for which the Church is made to be infallible is that the truth shall be taught to every generation. Whether men will be correctly guided by such teaching depends upon themselves. We are as firmly convinced as the objector that there is no short and easy method of attaining certainty in the truths of our religion, and no means whatever of acquiring *infallible* certainty. It suffices for our guidance that the truth is infallibly *taught*, and that we can, by the obedience of faith, attain to *sufficient* subjective assurance and knowledge for our eternal welfare.[2]

[1] Salmon, *Infallibility*, pp. 97 *et seq.*, and *passim*, raises this difficulty, and confuses the claim of infallible authority with that of infallible guidance.

[2] The craving for that peace which is conditioned by the banishment of doubt, and by final assurance of the truth, is perfectly legitimate;

(*f*). Another objection is that an acceptance of ecclesiastical infallibility has the effect of substituting a single and therefore weak basis of certainty for the numerous and mutually corroborative lines of verification and proof of which non-catholic believers make use.[1] Waiving the question as to the strength of ecclesiastical authority as a basis of Christian certainty,[2] we deny that any such substitution is involved. As has been said above, the Church welcomes every line of honest investigation whatsoever. It is the Church's function to proclaim divine truth, and that with infallible guidance from above; but every possible line of corroborative evidence lies open to the believer's use — especially the study of Holy Scripture, which the Church teaches to be the veritable Word of God written.

but its satisfaction is a goal to be reached only by humble submission to a probation in which anxious truth-*seeking* has its place and precious value. The Church's teaching, while leaving this probation unaltered, constitutes a needed security that our progress towards the full certainty of faith shall not be on mistaken lines. In this light we adopt Bishop McLaren's words, *Catholic Dogma*, p. 22: "Doubt needs to be assured that there is an infallible authority for faith to rest upon with the joy and peace of certitude. There is a rock of ages in this turbulent world. No storms can undermine it, no upheaval from beneath can jostle it from its calm equipoise. It eternally rests upon the being of God who is the Ultimate Authority."

[1] Salmon, *Infallibility*, pp. 279–280. We refer to this work so often because it is the most important attack on ecclesiastical infallibility with which we are acquainted. None the less the book contains much valuable matter.

[2] Certainly its infallibility does not constitute it to be the sole factor in acquiring spiritual knowledge.

(*g*) It is urged that the theory of ecclesiastical infallibility cannot consistently be maintained by those who acknowledge a development of ecclesiastical doctrine or an increasing maturity of the Church's hold upon her faith.[1] We reply that that depends upon what is meant by development. If it means that the Church alters her mind, and corrects her former teaching, within the sphere of her authority to teach necessary saving truth, then indeed to concede such development is to concede her fallibility. But, if the development referred to means a deeper analysis of her faith, a fuller explication of it, a more scientific co-ordination of its contents, and a richer application of unchanging truth to the changing exigencies of human life,[2] surely there is no evidence in such development of error subsequently corrected, or of fallibility. That particular lines of development have occurred within the Church which suggest fallibility we do not deny; but none of these developments have ecumenical authority,[3] and none of them affect the truth of our contention.

(*h*) Finally, it is said that the theory of ecclesiastical infalliblity is unworkable; for the dogmatic office of the Church in her ecumenical capacity has been effectually brought to an end by ages of schism, so as to be dead or at least moribund. Unless believers accept the papal claims, it may be urged, where can they go to hear the

[1] Salmon, *Infallibility*, pp. 274–277.

[2] See below, ch. ix. Pt. I., for a consideration of these lines of development.

[3] Thus such as are distinctively Roman, distinctively Oriental, or distinctively Anglican, have no such authority.

living voice of the Catholic Church? A Church that cannot decide a single question is surely not infallible.[1]

We do not of course, as will appear later, take refuge from this difficulty by accepting the papal claims.[2] But the difficulty is more apparent than real. As we show elsewhere, the framing of new ecumenical definitions and decrees of faith is but one of the manifold ways in which the Church fulfils her dogmatic and teaching function.[3] A living voice is not necessarily to be identified by its issuance of fresh definitions, nor may we maintain on *a priori* grounds that more definitions are required than those which the Church framed of old and everywhere continues to repeat and enforce. Everything which the Church universally requires, whether collectively or diffusively, to be taught to her children is her living voice. So long, therefore, as we find, as we do find, that the Church's ancient faith is embodied in every part of the Catholic Church in what is ordered to be said or done by her ministers, we are entitled to claim that she has not ceased to exercise her teaching office. And she does exercise it in a manner that has the effect of making every controversy of faith temporary, and every heresy short-lived. No more may be required; and it is not promised that the Church shall have power or permission to stifle erroneous doctrine at

[1] Salmon, *Infallibility*, pp. 269–273, 278–280.

[2] See below, ch. v. Pt. III. The only justification for doing so would be the conviction that the voice of the Papal See is the voice of the Catholic Church.

[3] See below, ch. iv. §§ 1, 7.

its birth.[1] She simply continues to sing her ancient song, in tones that can be heard by those who put their ears to the ground and listen. Those who count fallible votes and listen only to innovating preachers are often misled, but not by the Church, whose creeds and other official formularies are available for all.

§ 16. The distinction should be noted between the infallibility and the indefectibility of the Church. The former signifies the invariable truth of the Church's ecumenical teaching, the latter the certainty that the Church as a whole will never become apostate or cease to exist. Her indefectibility is guaranteed by the promise that the gates of hades shall not prevail against her.[2] But we must not read too much into this promise. It is not guaranteed that the Church's loyalty to Christ will always be conspicuous. The Spirit's protection has not in fact prevented even episcopal time-serving; and the Arian conflict is a significant reminder that no extent or degree of unfaithfulness is impossible in the Church that does not bring to an end her relation and allegiance to her Lord. His promise should be interpreted consistently with what He has allowed to hap-

[1] "Truth does not employ coercive measures, and therefore men who do not use the eyes of the soul will not be forced to perceive it." McLaren, *Cath. Dogma*, p. 13.

[2] St. Matt. xvi. 18. Cf. xxviii. 20. The Church's perpetuity is predicted in 1 Sam. vii. 10–16; Psa. xlviii. 8; lxxxix. 29–37; Isa. lxi. 8, 9; Dan. ii. 44; and elsewhere. It is implied in St. Matt. xxiv. 14; St. John xiv. 16; and its consistency with the existence of much evil within is indicated in the parables of the Kingdom, esp. St. Matt. xiii. 36–42, 47–50.

pen in the Church. Otherwise we shall be compelled to acknowledge that the promise has not been fulfilled.[1]

[1] On the Church's indefectibility and perpetuity, see Palmer, *The Church*, Pt. I. ch. i, § 2, who gives useful ancient and modern references; Field, *The Church*, i. 10; Pearson, *Creed*, Art. IX. Waterworth, *Faith of Catholics*, Vol. I. pp. 204–249, gives a patristic catena.

CHAPTER IV

THE DOGMATIC OFFICE

I. *Its Nature and History*

§ 1. The Church exercises her teaching authority in manifold ways: for example, by (*a*) the preaching and other pastoral instruction of those who are appointed to teach her doctrine;[1] (*b*) catechetical instruction of children and converts;[2] (*c*) the ecclesiastical calendar, and biblical lessons which are arranged so as to exhibit its meaning; (*d*) appointed rites and offices, which derive their teaching value from the principle, *lex orandi, lex credendi;*[3] (*e*) dogmas.

The dogmatic office of the Church in its strict sense is concerned with the framing, imposition and continued maintenance of dogmas;[4] and ecclesiastical dogmas are formal definitions of truths necessary to be believed

[1] See § 4, below, on the teaching authority of the ministry.

[2] See p. 70, above.

[3] See below, § 13.

[4] On the dogmatic office, see Palmer, *The Church*, Pt. III. ch. v.; Pt. IV. chh. i.-vii.; Stanton, *Place of Authority*, ch. iv.; *Ch. Hist. Soc. Lecs.*, 2nd Series, paper II., by W. E. Collins; Darwell Stone, *Christian Church*, ch. xiii.; *Outlines of Dogma*, ch. x.; Strong, *Authority*, ch. vi.; Mozley, *The Dogmatic Office*, in *Lecs. and Other Theol. Papers*; Bethune-Baker, *Early Christian Doctrine*, pp. 5, *et seq.* That the Church possesses such an office is acknowledged by the Anglican Churches, *Arts. of Religion*, XX.

for salvation.[1] These dogmas possess, of course, the authority of the Church that imposes them; so that to reject any one of them is to reject the Church's teaching authority. It should be added that catholic or ecumenical dogmas include only such definitions as are imposed by the entire Catholic Church.

These dogmas are limited in range; but the verities which they define are central ones which imply the entire faith of the Church, so that those who accept them in good faith, and conform to the Church's discipline, are sufficiently safeguarded from every fundamental error.[2]

§ 2. The Church evidently possessed a "form of

[1] See Klee, *Manuel de L'Histoire des Dogmes*, pp. 36, 37; Suicer, *Thesaurus*, *s. v.* Δόγμα; Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Test.*, ibid.; Lightfoot, in *Coloss.* ii. 14; Armitage Robinson, in *Ephes.* ii. 15; Baldwin, *Dic. of Philos.*, *s. v.* "Dogma;" Hastings, *Dic. of the Bible*, *s. v.* "Doctrine" and "Dogma." In classical Greek Δόγμα means (a) opinion or resolution; (*b*) decree. It means decree in the New Testament, *e.g.* in St. Luke ii. 1; Acts xvi. 4; xvii. 7; Ephes. ii. 15; Col. ii. 14, 20. Ecclesiastical use combines (*a*) and (*b*), enforcing an opinion or teaching upon the faithful in the form of a definition and decree of faith. It is a narrower term than doctrine, for not all doctrines are decreed in dogmatic form; and it should not be confused with theological explication, by which the implications of the truth or fact, baldly defined by dogma, are exhibited. See Moberly, in *Lux Mundi*, pp. 250–255. Gore says, *Creed of the Christian*, p. 3, "A dogma is a . . . truth, stated in such a plain way that it can be used as a tenet, or part of the creed of a society of men, and taken for granted in all the affairs of life, and serve as a common standard of reference."

[2] This is what the House of Bishops of the American Church meant by describing the creeds, in their Declaration on Unity of 1886, as a "sufficient statement of the faith." See p. 80 of the *Journal of the Gen. Conv.* of 1886.

sound words"[1] in apostolic days. At all events the duty of continuing faithful to what had been taught in the Church was earnestly inculcated.[2] Somewhat early in the second century we discover traces of creeds, and the earliest creeds are sufficiently alike in structure and phraseology to suggest a common and apostolic source,[3] the variations being due to an oral method of transmission and to diverse local conditions and influences. These primitive creeds, or versions of the apostolic form of sound words, are concerned primarily with the divine Persons; and appear to be the result of an expansion of the baptismal formula. They were

[1] 2 Tim. i. 13, 14. Cf. Rom. x. 10.

[2] Such inculcation is either illustrated or implied in Rom. vi. 17; xvi. 17; 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2; Gal. i. 8; Ephes. iv. 14; 1 Thess. iv. 1, 2; 1 Tim. i. 3; vi. 12–14, 20, 21; 2 Tim. ii. 2; Tit. iii. 10, 11; Heb. v. 12; vi. 1, 2; xiii. 9; 2 St. Pet. ii. 21; 2 St. John 10; St. Jude 3. On the question of the apostolic origin of the creed, see Beveridge, *Works*, Vol. I. pp. 109–111; Thorndike, *Prins. of Christian Truth*, I. vii. 1–9. Some writers regard 1 Cor. viii. 6; xv. 3, 4; 1 Tim. iii. 16; Heb. vi. 1, 2, as echoes of credal language.

[3] It is thought that echoes of a primitive creed can be seen in Ignatius, *ad Trall.*, 9; *ad Smyrn.*, 1, 2, 3; Aristides, *Apol.*; Justin, *Apol.* I. 61; Irenæus, *adv. Haeres.*, I. 10. 1; iii. 4. 2; iii. 24. 1; iv, 23. 7; Tertul., *De Praes. Haer.*, 14; *Adv. Prax.*, 2; *De Virg., Vel.*, 1. See *Dic. of Christian Biog., s. v.* "Creed," by Swainson; Hastings, *Dic. of the Bible, s.v.* "Creed"; *Dic. of Christian Antiq., s.v.* "Creed"; *Catholic Encyc., s. v.* "Apostles' Creed"; Harvey, *Hist. and Theol. of the Three Creeds*, Vol. I. pp. 1–75; Swainson, *Apostles' and Nicene Creeds;* Lumby, *Hist. of the Creeds;* Heurtley, *Hist. of the Earlier Formularies of Faith;* Swete, *The Apostles' Creed;* Turner, *Hist. and Use of Creeds*, being *Ch. Hist. Soc. Lecs.*, No. 85; Sanday, in *Journal of Theol. Studies*, Oct. 1899 and Oct. 1901.

Very searching investigation into the origin of the creed was

probably employed chiefly for the instruction of catechumens.[1]

But the rise of heresies in the Church caused the insertion of words or phrases intended to define more precisely the truths that had suffered from perversion or denial. Thus the Roman version of the creed appears to have been elaborated in the second century against certain Gnostic errors. At all events, when the Church had to deal with the Arian heresy at the Council of Nicea, the method employed was to protect the truth of our Lord's Godhead by adopting an eastern version of the creed with slight additions, including the phrase "consubstantial (ὁμοούσιος) with the Father."[2]

This action became a precedent for succeeding Councils; and, as a result, the Nicene Creed received ecumenical sanction, along with certain additional decrees of faith, and became crystallized in form.[3]

undertaken by Caspari (d. 1892), who maintained its eastern origin. Kattenbusch maintained its Roman origin. McGiffert, *Apostles' Creed* (1902), pp. 9–21, holds that it was framed at Rome in order to shut out Marcionite Gnosticism. He assumes that the creed cannot have originated much earlier than the appearance of indisputable traces of it, and does not make allowance for the care with which the ancients concealed Christian mysteries from public knowledge. Cf. Heurtley, *Hist. of Earlier Formularies*, pp. 7, 8.

[1] Heurtley, *op. cit.*, pp. 3–6; Gumlich, *Christian Creeds*, p. 9.

[2] See Bull, *Defence of the Nicene Faith*, Bk. II. ch. i.; Newman, *Arians*, ch. iii. § i. 3; Suicer, *Thesaurus, s. v.* οὔσιος; Percival, *Seven Ecum. Councils*, pp. 3, 4; Bright, *Age of the Fathers*, Vol. I. pp. 86–94; Hefele, *Hist. of the Councils*, Bk. I. § 9; Bk. II. §§ 32–34.

[3] The history of the development of the Nicene Creed is given in Smith and Cheetham, *Dic. of Christian Antiq.*, *s. v.* "Creed," §§ 13–17; Hort, *Two Dissertations*.

Western creeds were crystallized more slowly, but in due time assumed the form known as the Apostles' Creed.[1]

The so called Athanasian Creed seems to have originated in Gaul, early in the fifth century. It is primarily a hymn, but has practically acquired the status and authority of a catholic creed.[2]

These three creeds, and the decrees of faith which were adopted by the Ecumenical Councils, constitute catholic dogmas in the strict sense of that phrase.[3] Other ecclesiastical formularies exist that correctly define, or at least are consistent with, the mind of the whole Church touching the matters covered by them; but their formal authority is local only. They constitute provincial rather than catholic dogmas. Their

[1] Smith and Cheetham, *Dic. of Christian Antiq., s. v.* "Creed," §§ 18–23; Swete, *Apostles' Creed;* McGiffert, *Apostles' Creed,* pp. 21–36.

[2] Waterland's *History of the Athanasian Creed* is not wholly antiquated, although in need of correction in detail by later studies. See Cazenove, in *Dic. of Christian Biog., s. v.* "Quicunque Vult"; Smith and Cheetham, *Dic. of Christian Antiq., s. v.* "Creed," §§ 24 *et seq.*; Ommaney, *Crit. Dissert. on the Athan. Creed;* A. E. Burn, *Introd. to the Creeds,* pp. 124–185. Notes in the *Journal of Theol. Studies* on Eusebius of Vercelli, by C. H. Turner (Oct. 1899, p. 126) and A. E. Burn (July, 1900, p. 592).

[3] For the ecumenical creeds, see Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom;* Heurtley, *Harmonia Symbolica;* Gumlich, *Creeds and Confessions.* For the decrees of faith of the Ecumenical Councils, Bindley, *Ecumenical Documents of the Faith;* Percival, *The Seven Ecumenical Councils;* Denzinger, *Enchiridion Symbolorum et Definitionum* (a Latin compendium which includes other documents having authority in the Roman Church). For a brief survey of the ecumenical decrees of faith, see below, ch. v. § 6.

phrases, at all events, are not binding in every portion of the Catholic Church.[1]

§ 3. This brief account of the development of dogma will help us, perhaps, to consider the purpose of the Church's dogmatic office; and, later on, to define its agency, method, and limitations.

Its purpose is threefold: (*a*) To instruct converts to Christianity and the young in the leading truths of their religion; (*b*) to exclude erroneous definitions and denials of these truths; (*c*) to preserve the original faith, for the benefit of successive generations, until the end of the world.[2]

Obviously, in order to fulfil these ends, the Church must seek to make her definitions as precise as possible, provided their range is limited to what has been clearly and certainly revealed. She must also endeavour to employ terms that are capable of being accepted permanently in the same meaning. If the creeds are to serve their purpose permanently, "fixedness of interpretation" is of their "essence."[3]

[1] The authority of provincial formularies is considered below, ch. v. § 7. A survey of the chief Provincial Councils and their decrees is found in § 8 of the same chapter; and § 9 deals with the Anglican Articles.

[2] See Illingworth, *Reason and Revel.*, pp. 121–132.

[3] Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. vi. § 15; and the *Pastoral Letter of* 1894 contained in the *Journal of the General Convention of* 1895, pp. 382, 411 *et seq.* The word "interpretation" is often used in the larger sense of exhibiting the implications and bearings of the subject-matter. In that sense credal interpretation grows with widening knowledge and experience. We are here concerned with the necessary and dogmatic meaning of the creed itself, strictly considered.

It is a serious mistake to suppose that the Church seeks to enlarge the area of her definitions beyond necessity, or to crystallize orthodoxy in the forms of thought of a particular age or philosophy. The Church has been remarkably sparing in her definitions, and ecumenical dogmas cover only such truths as constitute, so to speak, the ultimate premises of Christian thought and belief, to deny or alter which would subvert the religion of Jesus Christ.[1] If terms are borrowed from philosophy — this is sparingly done — their meaning is determined not by their source, but by their new and dogmatic context, and by their employment to define what has been handed down in the Church from the beginning.

[1] That this is so can be illustrated by comparing the dogmas of the Ecumenical Councils with the elaborate formularies of the reformation period, none of which have ecumenical authority. The fact is that the elaborateness of Confessions of Faith is usually in inverse proportion to their catholic value; for elaborateness of doctrine is prejudicial to its world-wide adoption, and an Ecumenical Council is so called because its decisions have been thus adopted.

The cry, "Back to Christ" (see *s. v.* in Hastings', *Dic. of Christ*) is based to some extent on the mistakenly supposed contrast between the Christ of the Gospels and of the creeds. Ritschl treats faith as not belief in doctrine, but trust in a living person. But the very purpose of dogma is, of course, to shut out errors that undermine such trust, and deprive us of the Christ of the Gospels. Liddon, *Divinity of our Lord*, pp. 34–43, states and answers the objections to dogmatic definitions touching Christ's person based on æstheticism, anti-doctrinal morality and subjective pietism. Cf. his *University Serms.*, 2d Series, VII. pp. 102–104; Moberly, in *Lux Mundi*, pp. 243–244, Fairbairn, *Philos. of Relig.*, pp. 3–5, who maintains that, without the conception of Christ defined by the Councils, "the Christian religion would long ago have ceased to live."

In brief, the purpose of the Church's dogmatic office is not scholastic, or philosophical, or restrictive of real freedom of thought. "Free thought" should mean thought that is not hindered from attaining its legitimate end — the truth. All thought is based on premises, and it is free in proportion to the truth and adequacy of these premises. "The truth shall make you free." [1] Catholic dogmas furnish thinkers with true premises, and thus make for freedom of thought. This cannot be gainsaid except on the assumption that these dogmas are not really true.[2]

II. *How Exercised*

§ 4 We come now to the agencies, methods, and limitations of the Church's dogmatic office.

It determines the manner of her use of agents that, as we have seen, the Church's teaching authority is corporate, and cannot be displaced by that of any ministerial agents whatsoever; so that, whatever agents may be employed, their authority is subordinate to hers, and the ultimate force of their teaching depends upon its agreement with what she has transmitted to them to teach.[3]

The dogmatic office obviously can only be exercised

[1] St. John viii. 32.

[2] Liddon, *Univ. Serms.*, 1st Series, IV. pp. 67–78; Stanton, *Place of Authority*, pp. 187–190; E. T. Green, *The Church*, pp. 139–141; Illingworth, *Reason and Revel.*, pp. 6–7; Garbett, *Dogmatic Faith*, pp. 22–26.

[3] Collins, in *Ch. Hist. Soc. Lecs.*, 2d Series, pp. 87–88; Palmer, *The Church*, Vol. II. pp. 76–80, 106–109.

in an official manner, that is, by the employment of official agents.[1] The divinely appointed organization of the Church determines broadly what agents shall be employed. Christ has given to the ministry the function of representing the Church officially in the matter of teaching.[2] And, since all the powers and functions of the ministry are possessed by, and proceed from, the highest order, the episcopate,[3] the fulfilment of the dogmatic office pertains peculiarly to the bishops of the Church. No human appointments can be valid which subvert divine arrangements; and the commission to make disciples of all nations was given by Christ, in the first instance, to the apostles and those who should succeed to their ministerial functions.[4]

It remains, however, that the episcopate must act

[1] The fact that Roman writers urge this in their pleas for the necessity of the papal system does not alter its truth. It is a *non sequitur* that the Church must always employ the Papal See.

[2] Acts xx. 28; Rom. x. 15–17; 1 Cor. iv. 1; xii. 28–29; Ephes. iv. 11–15; 2 Tim. ii. 2; Heb. xiii. 7–9, 17; 1 St. Pet. v. 1–4.

[3] The Church is built upon the apostles and prophets, Ephes. ii. 20.

[4] St. Matt. xxviii. 19–20. The fathers were agreed touching this arrangement. See, *e.g.*, Ignatius, *passim;* Iren., *Adv. Haer.*, III. iii. 1–4; iv. 1; IV. xxvi. 2; xxxiii. 8; V. xx. 1; Chrys., *Homil. in Tit.*, ii. 2; Cyprian, *Ep. ad Florent. Pupian.* lxix; Ambrose, *De Off.*, i. 1–4. The unique teaching authority of the episcopate is illustrated by the reluctance with which the preaching function was conferred on inferior clergy. Thus, when St. Augustine was authorized to preach during his presbyterate, it was recognized to be unprecedented in Africa. On the subject of the teaching authority of the episcopate, see Palmer, *The Church*, Pt. IV. ch. ii; Darwell Stone, *Christian Church*, pp. 331–347; Rackham, in *Ch. Hist. Soc. Lecs.*, 2d Series, pp. 98–108.

representatively and constitutionally. The bishops do not constitute an independent body, but are organs of a Catholic Church.[1] They are empowered to speak for the Church in a sense not true of others. But "for the Church" means in accordance with the mind of the corporate and catholic body. Infallibility, whatever it may signify, pertains to the Church as a whole, so that no episcopal decision can stand when found to violate the corporate mind of the Church. Even General Councils can err, and have erred; but, in such event they are repudiated by the Church in due season. We shall treat of Councils, and also of papal decisions, in the next chapter.

§ 5. The method of the Church's dogmatic office is necessarily determined by its end, and by circumstances of the moment. Its end is, as we have seen, to make known in accurate terms such contents of the primitive faith as seem desirable to be defined for the guidance and safety of the faithful in the way of salvation. The method is primarily one of positive definition of what has been revealed.[2] The Church does not undertake

[1] The whole body of the faithful is a "royal priesthood": 1 St. Pet. ii. 9. The exhortation to contend for the faith is given to all. St. Jude 3. See Rackham, in *Ch. Hist. Soc. Lecs.*, 2d Series, pp. 100–104, 134–139; Palmer, *The Church*, Pt. IV. ch. iii.; Jer. Taylor, *Dissuasive*, Pt. II. Bk. I. § 4; Geo. Moberly, *Admin. of the Holy Spirit*, pp. 66–74 *et passim*.

[2] There is indeed a negative element in the purpose of dogma — the exclusion of erroneous notions: Maccoll, *The Creed*, pp. 1–6. But the supreme purpose is positive, to define what has been received. Gore emphasizes the negative aspect in *Bamp. Lecs*, pp. 116 *et seq.*; and *Dissertations*, p. 170. Cf. Moberly, in *Lux Mundi*, p. 240.

to dogmatize as to the proper solution of speculative problems suggested by her doctrines; and the fact that her Councils have not faced such problems is an evidence of their faithfulness to the task set before them. It is not a proof of failure of duty.[1]

The method of the dogmatic office is determined also by circumstances of the moment — especially by the appearance of heretical teaching, and the necessity of defining imperilled truths in terms that will exclude such heresies from acceptance by the faithful.[2] This does not cause the Church's definitions to become negative, although her choice of terms is determined by the purpose of excluding error. Thus the positive end of defining truth is retained, while negations and subversions are guarded against. And, lest the Church's mind touching heresy should escape notice by reason of the positive form of her dogmas, the heresies which occasion new definitions are specifically condemned and anathematized by the Councils that put these dogmas forth.[3]

[1] That they did not face these problems is referred to by Gore, *Dissertations*, p. 162; Ottley, *Incarn.*, Vol. II. pp. 109–110: cf. Vol. I. p. 323 (*d*).

[2] Many of the ancients shrunk from resort to conciliar action in doctrine. But the clearest proof of the Church's reluctance to dogmatize is seen in the notable fact that she has never in one single instance framed a new dogmatic definition spontaneously. Every one of her ecumenical definitions has been wrung from her by serious and aggressive heresy. See Beveridge, *Works*, Vol. I. pp. 117–120; Illingworth, *Divine Immanence*, p. 181.

[3] In anathematizing, the Church was but continuing New Testament usage. 1 Cor. xvi. 22; and espec. Gal. i. 8, 9; "But though we,

The Church has always assumed that the Scriptures are the Word of God, and that they contain all necessary saving doctrine.[1] But heretics also appeal to Scripture, although in support of error, and the Church is thus compelled to define, in extra-scriptural language, what is the true teaching of Scripture. This teaching she assumes to be identical with her own traditional faith.[2]

Her dogmatic method, accordingly, is to determine

or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be anathema"; etc. Cf. St. Matt. x. 14, 15; St. Luke x. 10–12. The woes denounced by our Lord on the pharisees, St. Matt. xx. 13–33, are *ad rem.* See Hastings, *Dic. of the Bible, s. v.* "Curse." It is to be remembered that ecclesiastical anathemas are but conventional methods of exercising the divinely appointed and judicial function of binding. St. Matt. xvi. 19; xviii. 17, 18. They also have only a present and conditional force, being effective only so long as the offence continues, and in no sense anticipating the final judgment. No doubt the exercise of penal judgment in the Church is attended by danger of loss of charity; but no more so than is all penal justice, and the Church may not abdicate her binding function. See Suicer's *Thesaurus, s. v.* Ἀνάθεμα; Bingham, *Antiq.*, Bks. xvi., xvii. The damnatory clauses of the Athanasian hymn echo St. Mark xvi. 16, certainly of primitive origin, although not written by St. Mark. They have reference to wilful and persistent heretics and apostates, and presuppose knowledge of the true Gospel on their part. See Moberly, in *Lux Mundi*, pp. 258–260. The difficulty which lies behind much writing on this subject is non-belief in men's responsibility for their opinions. This responsibility is no doubt limited in each instance by the extent of providentially afforded opportunities, but no man may neglect without sin such opportunities of attaining to a true faith.

[1] Cf. above, ch. iii. § 2, pp. 66–69, and note 3, p. 67.

[2] Tertullian's emphatic refusal to argue with heretics as to the meaning of Scripture is well known. *De Praes. Haer.*, xix. Cf. Vincent of Lerins, *Comm.*, ii., xxv. That the Church seeks only to

and define what has been handed down in the Church from pentecostal days, touching the doctrine in controversy. The precise content of traditional doctrine is determined by comparison of the traditions of local Churches and sees, as defined by their episcopal representatives; and that which is thus ascertained to have been handed down in all the Churches is declared to be the mind of that Holy Spirit who both guides the Church and inspires the Scriptures.[1]

New terms are adopted, and these are sometimes borrowed from metaphysical sources. But, as has been stated above, the purpose for which they are employed is simply to define accurately the teaching of Scripture and the Church. No new faith is adopted, nor is any speculative philosophy sanctioned; but the terms adopted are permanently crystallized in dogmatic significance by the end in view and by the context in which they are imbedded.[2]

In brief, the dogmatic method of the Church is posi-

define her original doctrine, contained in Scripture, see Collins, in *Ch. Hist. Soc. Lecs.*, 2d Series, pp. 59–74; Gore, *Roman Cath. Claims*, chh. iii., iv., *passim*.

[1] Vincent of Lerins shows how this method was pursued by the third Ecumenical Council. *Comm.* xxxi.

[2] St. Augustine, *De Trin.*, VII. 9, shows that the use of extra-scriptural terms was due to the necessity of excluding heretical interpretations of Scripture. Cf. Beveridge, *Works*, Vol. I. pp. 118–120. Strong, *Authority*, pp. 97–106, 109–111; Illingworth, *Divine Immanence*, p. 181; Liddon, *Divinity of our Lord*, pp. 443–447. In his sermon, *The Inspiration of Selection*, pp. 14, 15, Liddon shows that the Church was guided by the Spirit to select philosophical terms, and consecrate them to be the vehicles of scriptural doctrine. Cf. above, p. 108, and note 1 *in loc.*

tive, definitive, defensive, and exclusive. Comparison and synthesis are employed to determine what has been handed down in all the Churches; and the identity of catholic tradition with the real teaching of Scripture is taken for granted.

§ 6. The range of catholic dogmas, as we have said above, is somewhat limited.[1] They do not define all the truths which have been revealed; and there are other contents of the faith of the Church which are vital and necessary to be believed. The distinction between implicit and explicit faith is involved here. By implicit faith we accept whatever is revealed by God and held by the Catholic Church, whether embodied in dogmatic phrases or not. By explicit faith we receive whatever definitions of her faith the Church may impose, interpreting them in accordance with their original meaning.[2]

It is neither necessary nor possible that individual believers should define scientifically or exactly for themselves all the contents of the catholic faith. But it is possible for all to accept that faith with practical security and sufficient understanding; that is, if they accept the Church's dogmas, submit in good faith to her mind and guidance, and practise her sacramental

[1] Only the catholic creeds and the decrees of faith of the Ecumenical Councils can, strictly speaking, come under this category. Cf. p. 108, and ch. v. § 6.

[2] On explicit and implicit faith, see Forbes, *Nicene Creed*, p. 17; Newman, *Arians*, ch. ii. § i. 3, pp. 143–145. Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, p. 135, note; and St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, II. II. ii. 5, 6.

ways wherein her mind is implied and applied to the spiritual life.[1]

The Church's dogmas are concerned with central truths, in which all the rest of saving doctrine is involved. The guidance of the Holy Spirit enables the Church to distinguish between errors that threaten permanent subversion of the faith and those that are less grave and less enduring among docile believers in her doctrine. Even human wisdom and human analogies show that successful teachers do not make use of a multitude of definitions, but content themselves with defining central truths and principles. Such was our Lord's method. He laid down certain leading principles with great clearness, and His Holy Spirit guided the apostles in due season to understand and explain unmistakably the chief bearings of His self-manifestation, death, and resurrection. All else was left to the Spirit-guided intelligence of those who should believe on His name, and submit to the discipline of His Church.[2]

An analysis of the Church's creeds and other dogmatic definitions shows that they are limited in content to three classes of truths: (*a*) the doctrine of the Trinity, embodied in affirmations concerning the three divine Persons; (*b*) primary facts of the Gospel, by which our practical relations to God are determined; (*c*) the truths which determine the manner of our spiritual life, or the regimen of the Catholic Church,

[1] Cf. above, ch. iii. § 15 (*h*); and below, § 7 of this chapter.

[2] See Cotterill, *Genesis of the Church*, Pt. II. ch. i.

and man's final destiny.[1] It ought to be clear that one whose faith is sound on such points, and whose life is guided by such truths, is not likely to go astray to any fatal extent. Fuller definitions might save some from toil and doubt, perhaps; but such difficulties are inherent in genuine probation, and are conducive to our appreciation of truth. Moreover, additional definitions would be more likely to challenge the opposition of the unspiritual than add security to those who accept existing dogmas loyally.

Schism is indeed a most grievous evil. But the fact is undeniable that God is able to overrule this evil and convert it into an instrument for good. We may believe, and be thankful, that He has made use of schisms to prevent the Church from imposing more dogmas than are really necessary for the protection of the faithful. The Church's long struggle with heresy had engendered a tendency to define with greater fulness and subtlety than the Church's total experience justifies. Whatever happens within the Church, it is the Spirit that guides the Church as a whole, and makes all things work out for her ultimate good.

§ 7. The Church may cease for many long ages to exercise her dogmatic office, so far as it concerns the imposition of new definitions of her faith. But this office continues to be exercised uninterruptedly, none

[1] On the limited contents of the creeds and ecumenical dogmas, see McLaren, *Cath. Dogma*, pp. 48–51; Illingworth, *Reason and Revel.*, pp. 182–184. Tertullian rebukes curiosity touching matters not *de fide*, in *De Præsc. Haer.*, ch. xiv,

the less, by the permanent maintenance and enforcement of existing dogmas, and by their continued embodiment in canon-law and in ecclesiastical discipline and usages.

To use modern parlance, the Church never ceases to possess and utter a "living voice." [1] This voice is her own, for its language is undeniably prescribed by her. It is also a living voice, because uttered in obedience to a discipline that is adjusted from time to time to the conditions and circumstances of each succeeding age and each several part of the Catholic Church. Constant readiness to set forth new and formal definitions of the truths contained in the faith may prove to be a symptom of restlessness and lack of confidence in the grace of God, rather than a sign of vigorous life and pedagogic wisdom.

III. *Tradition*

§ 8. The dogmatic office of the Church requires, as we have seen, a careful transmission of the faith, in its purity and integrity, to subsequent generations. The term "tradition" is here used for this process of transmission in all its varied lines and forms.[2]

[1] The subject of the Church's living voice is considered below, in chapter viii. § 4.

[2] On tradition see Palmer, *The Church*, Pt. III. ch. iii.; Stanton, *Place of Authority*, pp. 158–166; Wilhelm and Scannell, *Manual*, Bk. I. Pt. I. chh. ii., iv.; Ottley, in *Ch. Hist. Soc. Lecs.*, 2d Series, pp. 28–41; Collins, *ibid.*, pp. 55–67; Lacey, *Elem. of Christian Doc.*, pp. 11–13, 21; Baring-Gould, *Our Inheritance*, ch. xxxiii. pp. 342–345; Pearson, *Conciones ad Clerum*, I.; Pusey, *Eirenicon*, Vol. I., pp. 82 *et seq.*

§ 9. These lines and forms are manifold.

(*a*) The first and richest in subject-matter is the scriptural; for it may not be denied that the Scriptures

The New Testament is clear in regard to the function and duty of the Church to transmit that, and that only, which has been revealed. The Spirit's guidance is to bring such things to remembrance, St. John xiv. 26; Christ's ministers are stewards, not creators of divine mysteries, 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2; xv. 3; Christians are to hold fast the traditions, 2 Thess. ii. 15; iii. 6; the Church is the pillar and ground, not the inventor, 1 Tim. iii. 15; what is committed to our trust must be kept, 1 Tim. vi. 20; even in the form of sound words, 2 Tim. i. 13, 14; iii. 14; what had been seen and heard was taught by the apostles, Heb. ii. 3; 1 St. John i. 1–3; those who lack this doctrine are to be shunned, 2 St. John 10; the faith once for all delivered is to be contended for, St. Jude 3. On the other hand, the accretion of man-made traditions is possible, and such traditions are condemned. Cf. St. Matt. xii. 1–8; xv. 2–20; St. Mark vii. 3–9; St. Luke vi. 1–11; Col. ii. 8; 1 Tim. 1, 4; iv. 7; 1 St. Pet. i. 18.

The patristic recognition of the importance and authority of tradition is emphatic. Clement of Rome, *Ep. ad Cor.*, xxx. 1, condemns innovators upon tradition. Cf. chh. vii. 2; xlii. The *Didache*, ch. iv., urges to "keep what thou hast received, neither adding to it nor taking from it." Teachers who do otherwise are not to be received, ch. xi. Ignatius, *ad Magnes.*, ch. 13, makes "the ordinances of the Lord and of the apostles" paramount. Irenæus identifies heresies by their modernness, *Adv. Hær.*, III. iv. 3; and contrasts their waywardness to the sure and consentient traditions of the Church, V. xx. 1. Tertullian appeals to the same criterion of modernness, *De Præsc. Haer.*, 29–31; 34, 35; *Adv. Prax.*, 2; *Adv. Marc.*, v. 19; for Christ revealed truth to the apostles to be handed on by tradition, *De Præsc. Haer.*, 20. Clement of Alexandria shows that ecclesiastical tradition is prior to that of heretics, *Strom.*, vii. 17; and treats those who spurn it as unfaithful, vii. 16. Origen says ecclesiastical teaching transmitted from the apostles is alone to be accepted, *De Prin.*, Pref. 2. Cyprian describes Christ, the final court of appeal, as the fount of tradition, *Epis.* lxxiii. 10; Cf. lxxiv. 19. The sentiment of the Nicene fathers is expressed by Athanasius, *c. Arian.* I. iii., when he says that novel-

constitute an ecclesiastical means of tradition.[1] The writers of Holy Scripture, especially of the New Testament, wrote from a strictly ecclesiastical point of view; and, although the exigencies which occasioned their writing were widely diverse, what had been received from God by the existing Church of God was embodied in what they wrote, and remains there for the benefit of all later generations. Nor is this all. The Church herself gradually took over these Scriptures, incorporated them into a Sacred Canon, and has preserved them, with the continual acknowledgment that they

ties, not derived from the fathers, are by that fact proved to be heresy. It is unnecessary to give further citations. A patristic catena is to be found in Waterworth, *Faith of Catholics*, Vol. I. pp. 394–458. The position of the ancients is registered in Canon XIX. of the Council in Trullo, 690 A.D., which forbids teachers to vary in their expositions from "the tradition of the God-bearing fathers. And if any controversy in regard to Scripture shall have been raised, let them not interpret it otherwise than as the lights and doctors of the Church in their writings have expounded it . . . For through the doctrine of the aforesaid fathers the people . . . will remodel their life for the better, and not be led by ignorance," etc. The Vincentian rule of faith, in its article of antiquity, brings into line all who accept that rule: see *Comm.*, ii., iv.–vi., viii.–x., xxxi.–xxxiii. — that is, antiquity of doctrine transmitted by the Church. An Anglican catena is given in *Tracts for the Times*, 78. The emphasis on non-scriptural tradition in the Roman Church cannot, of course, reduce the significance of the teaching of the Vatican Council, *Constit.* I. cap. iv., that "the Holy Spirit was not promised to the successors of Peter, that by His revelation they might make known new doctrine, but that by His assistance they might inviolably keep and faithfully expound the revelation or deposit of faith delivered through the apostles."

[1] The custom of viewing Scripture in antithesis to other means of tradition, and of narrowing the proper significance of the word "tradition" by using it with exclusive reference to the latter, was

contain her ancient faith. Thus it is through the Church that we receive the Scriptures. And among the reasons which the Church gives for transmitting them to us is this, that by searching them we can compare her later teaching with her primitive faith. The fact that these Scriptures are divinely inspired, does not interfere in the least with their value as means of ecclesiastical tradition, but rather adds to that value. It assures us that the ecclesiastical teaching which they contain is not only primitive but divine in source.

§ 10. The term tradition is usually employed more narrowly, with reference to other lines of ecclesiastical transmission.

(*b*) Most commonly the word is applied to oral transmission from one generation of believers to another, such as is necessarily involved in the spiritual conversations of the faithful, in the oral training of the young, and especially in the public and catechetical teaching of ecclesiastical ministers. Each new generation necessarily overhears the conversation, and imbibes more or less of the ideas, of the preceding one; and the generally

crystallized in the decrees of Trent, Sess. IV., in which revealed truth is said to be "contained in the written books *and* in the unwritten traditions"; and has been perpetuated by post-reformation controversy. The result has been to separate unduly the conceptions of ecclesiastical and biblical authority, this in turn causing an emphasis on one at the expense of the other, and a consequent weakening of men's hold on both. The fact is that the two authorities discharge the common function of tradition. And we have chosen to emphasize this by our terminology, in order to do justice to the close interconnection and mutually corroborative value of ecclesiastical and biblical authority.

recognized obligation among Christians of preserving the faith without change in its substance would, for a long time at least, have prevented any general departure from the original faith of the Church, even if there had been no other safeguard.[1]

At an early date the rise of heresy led to special care in this matter. Local traditions were compared with each other, and it was acknowledged that the bishops were primarily responsible for maintaining the purity of tradition in each locality and for making known its contents to inquirers. Before long it came also to be recognized that the great centres of Church life enjoyed peculiar security in the matter of tradition. The faithful were apt to congregate to such places from all quarters, bringing with them their local traditions. This had the effect inevitably of giving to the traditions of metropolitan sees a certain representative

[1] As is well known, the ancients excelled moderns in their capacity to remember and preserve oral traditions, because they were more dependent than we are upon such means of information, and were not distracted by the modern multiplicity of interests and variety of reading.

The working of oral tradition in the ancient Church is well illustrated by a well-known passage cited by Eusebius, *Eccles. Hist.*, V. 20, from a letter of Irenæus to Florinus, written towards the end of the second century. Irenæus says that he remembers vividly the teaching which he received in boyhood from Polycarp, including that holy man's description of his intercourse with St. John and of the accounts which the beloved disciple was wont to give of our Lord's miracles and teaching. Thus an oral tradition through but two intermediaries is crystallized in a letter written at least 150 years after the origin of that tradition, and is thus preserved for future generations. See Wilhelm and Scannell, *Manual*, Bk. I. Pt. I. ch. iv. § 21.

value. Rome, in particular, was the capital of the whole Roman empire, and the saying that "all roads lead to Rome" suggests the fact that people from every part of the world were to be met there — Christians among them, both clerical and lay. Under these circumstances Roman traditions acquired a pre-eminently cosmopolitan and catholic value, which made the Bishop of Rome, in practice, the most important and influential guardian of ecclesiastical tradition. The habit of deferring to his judgment in matters of doctrine, grew naturally out of these conditions.[1]

§ 11. (*c*) The guidance which the Holy Spirit gives to the Church does not altogether remove the limitations which attend oral traditions, even under the most favourable circumstances.[2] Inevitably, as time elapsed, other means of preserving the original faith

[1] The classic patristic passages on this point are Irenæus, *Adv. Haer.*, iii. 3; Tertullian, *De Præsc. Haer.*, 21, 32, 36. In ch. 28 Tertullian points out the unlikelihood that many Churches would concur in error. Irenæus remarks that "it would be tedious to enumerate the succession [in the tradition of doctrine] of all the Churches." Simply to avoid such toil he chooses the Church of Rome, "for to this Church, on account of her superior pre-eminence, it must needs be that every Church should come together, that is, the faithful from all sides; and in this Church the tradition from the apostles has always been preserved by men from all parts." The translation given is Gore's, in *Roman Cath. Claims*, pp. 96, 97. See Puller, *Prim. Saints*, pp. 19–35; Salmon, *Infallibility*, pp. 381–383; Bright, *Roman See in the Early Church*, pp. 29–36; Wilhelm and Scannell, *Manual*, Bk. I. Pt. I. ch. iv. § 22. 3, 4; Dom Chapman, *Bp. Gore and the Cath. Claims*, pp. 63–65.

[2] See Hooker, *Eccles. Polity*, I. xiii. 2; Newman, *Arians*, ch. ii. § 2, 3 *init.*

were depended upon more and more. The essential contents of oral tradition were summarized in creeds and other ecclesiastical formularies; and, when these began to assume documentary and permanent shape, they also began to overshadow oral tradition in the settlement of doctrinal controversies. Oral tradition has never ceased to have a real, although subordinate, value. But the fact that what we call the Nicene and Apostle's Creeds contained admittedly the primary elements of the traditional faith, and the circumstance that their form now became crystallized in many manuscripts, naturally led to their being treated more and more as the primary and formal instruments of catholic tradition.[1] These creeds were not merely registers of the state of oral tradition in the fourth century. They were also survivals of a "form of sound words" which had come down in all probability from the apostles themselves. The purely verbal nature of their differences points to a common source, the doctrine of the apostles.[2]

§ 12. (*d*) Oral traditions gained a less formal but very real protection through patristic literature in general, the amount of which increased with every generation. The writings of the earlier fathers were to a considerable extent embodiments of these traditions; and, like the creeds, tended to crystallize them, and by their wide circulation and influence prevented substantial

[1] Moberly, in *Lux Mundi*, pp. 239–245, shows that conciliar definitions represent no change of doctrine, but a growth in intellectual precision through experience with error. See Wilhelm and Scannell, *Manual*, Bk. I. § 24. Cf. § 22, *ibid.*

[2] Cf. § 2, above.

variations between different portions of the Church. This steadying influence was exercised to a special degree, of course, by the works of the more eminent theologians. Patristic literature has lived on, and constitutes a valuable means for checking the contents of tradition in later ages. Many pious opinions which have apostolic tradition alleged for their support are shown by patristic studies to be of later origin. And it is partly by such studies that we are able to establish the antiquity of the fundamental doctrines of present-day ecclesiastical teaching.[1]

The authority of an individual patristic writer, however, derives its weight from our knowledge that he truly represents the mind of the Church in his day. Some of the fathers are known to have been individualistic in certain directions. For example, it is known that so great a writer as St. Augustine expressed views on the subject of predestination which were not representative of traditional doctrine. So far as such limitations appear, we have to allow for them. It is to the consent of ancient writers that we look for the contents of the teaching handed down from the beginning.[2]

[1] Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. iii. § 14; x. §§ 3, 4. St. Athanasius says that it is enough to answer heresies "as follows: we are content with the fact that this is not the teaching of the Catholic Church, *nor did the fathers hold this*." Vincent of Lerins, *Comm.*, ch. 28, is very satisfactory. See Waterland, *Importance of the Doc. of the Trinity*, ch. vii.; Wilhelm and Scannell, *Manual*, Vol. I. pp. 75, 76.

[2] Vincent of Lerins, *Comm.*, chh. 10, 11, 17–19, points out the possibility that great writers may err, noticing especially the examples of

§ 13. (*e*) The line of tradition which is apt to be insufficiently emphasized, although its importance is very great, is that of the permanent institutions and usages of the Church.[1] Thus the observance of the Lord's day is practically coeval with the Christian dispensation, and is an abiding witness that the doctrine of our Lord's resurrection was contained in the original deposit of faith.[2] The more ancient features of the Christian year have similar value for tradition.

But the sacramental rites, dating as they do from New Testament times, and preserving in all parts of the world real unity of meaning in the midst of minor variations, and in spite of persecution and schism, are perhaps the most sure objective *media* of tradition. The baptismal formula has preserved the original doc-

Origen and Tertullian. The remedy (ch. 28) is to follow consent. Petavius disparaged unduly, and Bishop Bull exaggerated, the theological orthodoxy of ante-Nicene writers. Newman, *Arians*, ch. ii. § 4, estimates their value with better success. Jeremy Taylor emphasizes the limitations of the value of appeal to the fathers in *Liberty of Prophesying*, § 8. Cf. Palmer, *The Church*, Vol. II. pp. 55–57.

[1] Ottley, *Incarnation*, vol. I. pp. 148–150, says that tradition, the greater Sacraments, with holy seasons and the Lord's day, "constitute the basis and safeguard of Christian belief." Cf. Strong, *Authority*, ch. vii.; Hastings, *Dic. of Christ, s. v.* "Calendar, the Christian"; Wordsworth, *Ministry of Grace*, chh. vi., vii. The possibility of misuse of custom is referred to by a remark of St. Cyprian, *Ep.* lxxiii. 9, "Custom without truth is the antiquity of error."

[2] The Lord's Day was not a modification of the Jewish Sabbath, but a distinctly Christian institution, which did not immediately displace the Sabbath. Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 2; Rev. i. 10. Cf. St. Matt. xxviii. 1; St. Mark xvi. 9; St. John xx. 19, 26. See Hessey, *Sunday;* Wordsworth, *Ministry of Grace*, pp. 304–326; Gamble, *Sunday and the Sabbath* (Golden Lecs. of 1900–1901).

trine of the Trinity. The rite of Confirmation has transmitted to us the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and His economy of grace. Holy Orders teaches us of our Lord's commission and its unbroken transmission to our own time. Penance, Holy Matrimony, and Unction (the last unhappily neglected in the Anglican Churches) preserve, each in its own way, distinct aspects of the grace of Christ.

The Holy Eucharist, and the liturgies which are employed in its celebration, overshadow all these in their importance as means of tradition.[1] The fundamental outline and meaning of catholic liturgies has from the beginning been the same in every nation where the historic faith has been received. To-day Greek, Latin, and Anglican perform the same service, and exhibit in so doing the same catholic faith, in its ancient content and glory. Variations of phraseology and tongue have been many, and ruptures of intercommunion have been bitter and age-long, but nowhere in the world can one join in eucharistic worship without taking part in the exhibition of a common catholic faith, hardly one important element of which is wholly left out of its abiding testimony. There have been many heretical preachers in the Church, no doubt: but so long as these preachers duly celebrate the august mystery of the Christian Sacrifice, they contradict by the rite which they perform the heresies which they proclaim.[2]

[1] Maclear's *Evidential value of the Eucharist* is based upon this.

[2] *Lex orandi, lex credendi.*

§ 14. A consideration of these manifold ways in which the Church of God has handed down her faith, and of the various methods of study by which we are enabled to verify the sameness of what she now teaches with what she received in the beginning, ought to afford much encouragement. It shows that the Holy Ghost has made use of human safeguards in guiding the Church into the truth. The laws and limitations of human tradition have not been ignored, but have been employed and overruled with a providential wisdom that is open to human observation, and which, therefore, is calculated to assure us that the results of the process can be trusted. The fact remains that the Church has been supernaturally guided; and the marvellous unity of fundamental faith still existing in the Catholic Church of every nation is the result of supernatural as well as of human causes.[1]

§ 15. Our treatment of tradition would be incomplete if we neglected to notice that repeated purging out of accretions attends and guarantees the success of the Church's efforts to hand on her faith without altering its original content.

[1] Sabatier, *Religions of Authority*, ch. iii., employs the naturalness of tradition to disprove its supernatural overruling, as if the two could not cohere in working. Objections to dependence upon tradition are usually based on its supposed insecurity. The only tradition for which we contend is as secure as the evidence that we possess the Word of God in the Sacred Canon. So Waterland, *Works*, Vol. I. p. 514; and even Sabatier says, *op. cit.*, p. 154, "Without tradition the Scriptures are without external support, and cannot become a dogma; they remain simply historic documents," etc.

Novel phraseology is continually being used in theological expositions of doctrine, and successive schools of thought give disproportionate emphasis to limited portions of the faith, thereby obscuring other traditional elements of it. Sometimes grave departures result, and accretions continually appear. New usages become ancient, and bring doctrinal implications with them which tend to enlarge the substantial area of doctrinal traditions or modify their contents.

But these subtractions and accretions alike have to stand the test of time and repeated verification through the study and comparison of accredited lines of tradition — study which is undertaken afresh with every revival of theological learning.[1] The result is inevitable, and made secure by the Spirit who perpetually illuminates the Church's mind. Scripture, consent, creeds, ancient literature, permanent institutions and the liturgy combine to make the ancient faith recognizable, and have the effect of nullifying spurious traditions and teachings. No age is free from errors of its own, but they

[1] Critical scholarship is apt to be viewed only in antithesis to the obedience of faith, or loyalty to what has been handed down from the beginning. The fact is that sound criticism becomes, in the long run, one of the instruments by which the Holy Spirit protects the Church from departing from her ancient doctrine. And no criticism can hold its own permanently, unless it is sound. At all events, the Spirit's guidance is not disparaged because we obey the teaching of the Spirit to "test all things," and "hold fast that which is good." 1 Thess. v. 21. We are apt to limit unduly the methods and resources of the Spirit in guiding the Church. He can make all things work together for the fulfilment of Christ's promise to the Church. Cf. Rom. viii. 27–28.

all pass away in time through their inability to stand the test of the rule of faith. Nothing which lacks scriptural authority, universality, antiquity, and consent can hold its own within the Church universal, as necessary to be believed for salvation; and no doctrine which stands this test can fail to be reasserted after passing neglect.[1]

[1] Thus the very truth we are defending, of the supernatural authority of the universal Church, came to its own among Anglicans, after long obscuration, in the nineteenth century. The work of the Ecumenical Councils was to purge the catholic tradition of doctrine from heretical novelties.

CHAPTER V

COUNCILS AND POPES

I. *General Councils*

§ 1. In the last chapter we saw that the dogmatic office of the Church is normally exercised through her bishops, whose office is of divine appointment,[1] and is of a nature that empowers them to speak officially for the Church as no others can speak. But we also saw that bishops are not independent of the Church at large. Their utterances cannot bind the consciences of the faithful when found to be contrary to the corporate mind of the catholic body. This chapter will be devoted to the manner in which the bishops speak for the Church: whether by (*a*) General Councils;[2] (*b*) Provincial Synods; or (*c*) the Papal See.

[1] Ch. iv. § 4, above.

[2] On General and Ecumenical Councils and their authority, see Palmer, *The Church*, Pt. IV. chh. vii.-x.; Field, *The Church*, Bk. V. chh. xlviii.–liii.; Darwell Stone, *Christian Church*, pp. 355–362; Smith and Cheetham, *Dic. of Christian Antiq. s. v.* "Council"; Collins, in *Ch. Hist. Soc. Lecs.*, 2d Series, Lec. IV.; Wilberforce, *Prins. of Church Authority*. ch. iv.; Ottley, *Incarnation*, Vol. I. App., note B. Waterworth, *Faith of Catholics*, vol. I. pp. 460–477, gives a patristic catena.

We treat the Councils here in their function of defining the Church's mind. It is presupposed that their definitions must agree with Scripture, as must also the Church's mind itself. See above, ch. iii. § 2.

§ 2. General Councils constitute important machinery which the episcopate has employed in certain extraordinary emergencies, in order to set forth ecumenical definitions of the Church's traditional teaching on points obscured or denied by heretics. As extraordinary bodies the authority of these Councils depends upon their success in defining the Church's real mind, and upon their acceptance by the Church at large. The fact of their meeting creates a presumption that they will be guided by the Holy Spirit in their decisions; which may not be rejected by mere private judgment, or until it becomes clear that the Church herself does not accept them.

§ 3. But General Councils are not infallible in themselves. The infallibility of the Church resides in the whole catholic body; and no assembly of men whatever may impose its decisions upon the faithful independently of their subsequent acceptance by the Church.

As a matter of fact, General Councils have sometimes failed to achieve the end for which they were summoned, and have committed themselves to heresy.[1] Their

[1] That of Ariminum, A.D. 359, committed itself in effect to Arianism; and that of Ephesus, A.D. 449, called the Latrocinium, approved of the Eutychian heresy. These were General Councils, and practically all parts of the Church were represented at them. It may be replied that they were not truly free. The reply is that it is not always possible to distinguish between a Council that is truly free and one that is not. These Councils were General *pro forma*, and the only *authoritative* justification for rejecting them is their rejection by the Church. Article XXI. of the *XXXIX Articles*, which asserts that General Councils have erred, refers perhaps to later Western

errors have caused them to be rejected by the Church at large. The meeting together of fallible men, however formal their gathering may be, does not make them infallible; although it must be acknowledged that such gatherings are much more likely to avoid heresy than less representative assemblies. The Holy Spirit is present, although not with irresistible grace, and the burden of proof rests always upon those who deny the orthodoxy of the definitions adopted.

§ 4. The fallibility of such bodies can be realized more adequately, perhaps, if we remember that General Councils are extra-constitutional expedients of the moment. We believe that they are also providential means, but they are not of express divine appointment nor essential factors in the Church's normal rule. They represent one among various exceptional means by which the teaching of the several portions of the Church can be compared and digested into common terms.[1] In certain emergencies they are no doubt inevitable, since they obviously constitute the best and surest human means of formulating the Church's mind. But if God permits, and history shows that He does permit it, they may fail. The Church's teaching remains, and

Synods described as General; but its terms are applicable to every age. The subject is treated of by Forbes and other writers on *The Articles, in loc.* Cf. Field, *The Church*, Bk. V. ch. li. (who cites writers of all ages); Salmon, *Infallibility*, Lecs. XVI.–XVII., esp. pp. 281–282. Salmon's position is too negative.

[1] Their abnormal nature is seen in the fact that they are usually assembled by " the command and will of princes"; that is, not by the normal action of the Church, as is the case with provincial and diocesan synods meeting regularly.

finds expression in various ways; but God permits the formal definition of this teaching in ecumenical phrases to be delayed or even to be defeated.[1]

A General Council resembles in some respects an international convention, charged with the duty of framing a concordat or treaty which shall define the position to which all the nations participating are willing to agree. Duly accredited representatives are present, with official powers. Yet the terms which are adopted in such conventions must be ratified by the nations severally before the international authority of the convention, or of its decisions, is established. Such is the case with General Councils; and their decisions are subject to ratification or rejection by the Churches concerned.[2]

These remarks should make clear the distinction between a General and an Ecumenical Council. A General Council is one in which the Church militant as a whole is represented externally and *pro forma*.[3]

[1] Thus the Councils of Lyons and Florence were not permitted to settle the *filioque* controversy, although both the East and the West were represented in fact, whatever may have been the status of the Easterns who were present. That the Church is not prevented from teaching her faith by the failure of Councils, see Laud, *Conf. with Fisher*, xxxix., p. 428 (Ang. Cath. Lib.).

[2] Cf. Collins, in *Ch. Hist. Soc. Lecs.*, 2nd Series, pp. 183–186; Palmer, *The Church*, Vol. II. pp. 151 *et seq.*; Lias, *Nicene Creed*, pp. 154–156; George Moberly, *Admin. of the Holy Spirit*, pp. 121–124, on the necessity of ratification. Palmer cites Gallican writers.

[3] It is not necessary that every local jurisdiction shall be represented separately, but they must be represented in effect.

An Ecumenical Council is one, whether General or otherwise,[1] which has been received by the whole Church militant as rightly defining the Church's teaching.[2] An Ecumenical Council is said to be infallible; but such language should not be too strictly interpreted. The meaning is that the acceptance of the Council by the Church proves that it has not *in fact* erred.[3] Moreover, even this *ex post facto* infallibility is not attributed to Ecumenical Councils, except in relation to the doctrinal decisions by reason of which they are called ecumenical.[4]

§ 5. No insuperable difficulty should be felt because of the fact that the question of the ecumenicity of a Council may remain unsettled for a time.[5] No Council can take the place of the teaching Church, and the Church's mind continues to be expressed in her existing traditions, formularies, and sacramental life, even in the most trying times. Ecumenical decrees of faith

[1] That of Constantinople, in 381 A.D., was wholly Eastern in its membership.

[2] On the distinction between General and Ecumenical Councils, see Darwell Stone, *Christian Church*, p. 355; Palmer, *The Church*, Vol. II. pp. 150–152; Cheetham, in *Dic. of Christian Antiq.*, *s. v.* "Œcumenical."

[3] So Laud, *Conf. with Fisher*, xxxviii, p. 383 (Ang. Cath. Lib.).

[4] See on this point, Palmer, *The Church*, Pt. IV. ch. viii., who gives various references. In ch. iv. he treats of the irrefragible authority of Councils that secure universal acceptance, with citations from patristic and Anglican writers.

[5] How long the ecumenicity of a Council may be in doubt cannot be predicted beforehand. There was considerable delay in the case of the first, second, fifth, and seventh. A change of circumstances, and the clearing up of misapprehensions, may be necessary

are often very serviceable indeed for the welfare of the Church, but the Church does not derive her mind from them. If God permits the benefits which such decrees would secure to be deferred, He will somehow protect the Church. The Church as a whole continued to believe and teach in her worship the co-essential Godhead of Jesus Christ, during the darkest days of episcopal trifling with Arianism. *Athanasius contra mundum* never became *Athanasius contra ecclesiam*, although time-serving prelates proved traitors to the faith.[1] Prelates are not by themselves the Church.

The difficulties of such a period of struggle as we have mentioned are incidental to the principle already laid down — that God puts all men to a probation of faith. He does not cause sudden flashes of dogmatic truth to relieve men in times of confusion from moral effort in truth-seeking.[2] It is sufficient that in the Catholic Church He ever rewards a docile obedience of faith with sufficient light for salvation; and brings the Church herself safely through every conflict with heresy. This is the practical meaning of the Church's infallibility, that she can never cease to be the home of saving truth and the ark of safety for truth-seeking souls.

before the value of a Council's decision becomes generally apparent. There is, of course, an element of private judgment in ascertaining what Councils are ecumenical; but not because the individual is competent to determine their merits. The Church does this, and private judgment is here limited to ascertaining what the Church has decided *in re*.

[1] See Newman, *Arians*, App., note 5; Wilhelm and Scannell, *Manual*, Bk. I. § 23. ii.

[2] See above, ch. iii. § 15 (*h*).

§ 6. Seven Councils have been generally received in the Church, and are to be reckoned as Ecumenical.[1]

(*a*) That of Nicea, 325 A.D., asserted our Lord's Godhead against Arianism.

(*b*) That of Constantinople, 381 A.D., asserted the completeness of our Lord's Manhood against Apollinarianism; and the true Godhead of the Holy Spirit against Macedonianism.

(*c*) That of Ephesus, 431 A.D., asserted the unity of our Lord's Person, and that the Blessed Virgin is rightly called θεοτόκος, against Nestorianism.

(*d*) That of Chalcedon, 451 A.D., asserted the distinctness of our Lord's two natures, against Eutychianism.

(*e*) The second of Constantinople, 553 A.D., condemned the so-called "Three Chapters" because of their Nestorian teaching.

[1] Their proceedings are given in Hardouin, *Acta Conciliorum;* Percival, *Seven Ecumenical Councils;* Hefele, *History of the Councils*. Landon's *Manual of the Councils*, gives convenient summaries. These writers deal also with Provincial Councils.

Roman authorities accept 21 Councils, adding to our list: (8) Constantinople, 869; (9–12) Lateran, 1123, 1139, 1179, and 1215 A.D.; (13–14) Lyons, 1245 and 1274 A.D.; (15) Vienne, 1311 A.D.; (16) Constance, 1414–1418 A.D. (in part); (17) Basle, 1431 A.D. (in part); (18) Florence, 1438–1442 A.D.; (19) 5th Lateran, 1512–1517 A.D.; (20) Trent, 1545–1563 A.D.; (21) Vatican, 1869–1870 A.D. See Addis and Arnold, *Cath. Dic.*

The first four covered impliedly the whole field of doctrine determined by the seven, and are often appealed to exclusively. Thus the statute of Elizabeth of 1558, cap. i. § 36, makes their decisions a rule for detecting heresy. The *Homily on the Peril of Idolatry* recognizes the first six, and is followed by many Anglican writers. So Palmer, Vol. II. pp. 171–172, who gives other references. Field, *The Church*, Vol. IV. p. 61, evidently dislikes the seventh; but says,

(*f*) The third of Constantinople, 680 A.D., asserted the twofold will and operation of our Lord, against Monothelitism.

(*g*) The second of Nicea, 787 A.D., defined the right use of images in worship, and the purely relative honour due to them in that connection.[1]

These Councils not only set forth the Nicene Creed, and framed decrees of faith, but also approved and gave ecumenical authority to the Second and Third Letter of St. Cyril to Nestorius, and the Tome of Pope Leo to Flavian.

II. *Provincial Councils and Formularies*

§ 7. Provincial Councils[2] are, as their name indicates, representative of limited parts of the Church,

"So that there are but seven General Councils that the whole Church acknowledgeth, called to determine matters of faith and manners." Cheetham, in *Dic. of Christian Antiq.*, *s. v.* "Œcumenical," says seven are recognized. So Percival, *Seven Ecum. Councils*, pp. xv., 523–528; and Stone, *Outlines of Dogma*, note 40. An excellent discussion of the seventh, with reasons for believing in its ecumenicity, is given in *Church Quarterly Review*, July, 1896, Art. XI.

[1] The acceptance of this Council was delayed in the West, the Council of Frankfort rejecting it, apparently because of imperfect translations of its decrees. But during the Middle Ages it gained acceptance everywhere, including England, nor have the Anglican Churches taken any negative action since. Cf. previous note. The worship of images that it sanctioned, προσκύνησις, is not adoration, but a purely relative honour, not differing in essential significance from that which is paid everywhere to pictures of eminent and holy men.

[2] On the procedure and authority of Provincial and local Councils, see Palmer, *The Church*, Pt. IV. ch. xiii. § 1; Darwell Stone, *Christian Church*, pp. 337–344. Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. vii. §§ 1, 2.

and are of two sorts — ordinary and extraordinary. The ordinary ones are concerned with the normal government of the local Churches represented, and need no special ratification, so long as the arrangements continue in effect that cause their periodical occurrence.[1]

Extraordinary Councils are gathered to deal with special exigencies of common concern, and are often representative of larger portions of the Church than ordinary Councils. Such Councils depend for their subsequent authority upon the ratification, whether formal or implicit, of the local Churches represented. An example of such a Council is that of Antioch, about 270 A.D., which deposed Paul of Samosata for heresy.[2]

What has been said as to the presumptive authority of General Councils, and as to the non-competence of private judgment to reject them, holds good in relation to Provincial Councils, with a difference. Unless a Provincial Council is made Ecumenical through its

[1] The inferior clergy and even the laity often participate; as in the General Convention of the American Church to-day, and as is desired to bring about by reformation of the English Convocation. But there is no catholic precedent for the framing of authoritative definitions of doctrine by such participants. The confirmatory power of the laity in an "Established" Church is obvious. See Darwell Stone, *Christian Church*, pp. 347–354. The relation of the laity to General Councils is exhibited in Pusey on *The Councils*, *passim*.

[2] See Seeberg, *Hist.* of *Doctrines*, Vol. I. pp. 164–166; Hefele, *Hist. of the Councils*, Bk. I. § 9; Pullan, *The Church of the Fathers*, pp. 151–152.

ratification by the Church at large,[1] its formal authority in doctrine is confined to the local Churches actually represented.[2] It should be added that no provincial decision can continue to bind the consciences of Christian believers anywhere when it is shown to be in real conflict with ecumenical dogma or with the known mind of the Catholic Church. Subject to these limitations, the authority of duly constituted ecclesiastical Councils is paramount within the local Churches represented.

§ 8. Certain Provincial Councils, without being made Ecumenical, have been widely approved by theologians as expressing correctly the mind of the whole Church.[3]

(*a*) The Council of Carthage, 397 A.D., adopted a list of the Canonical Scriptures which has received universal consent in the Church since that time.[4]

(*b*) The Council of Orange, 529 A.D., adopted definitions on the subjects brought into controversy by the

[1] As was the Council of Constantinople — Second Ecumenical — 381 A.D.

[2] The case is slightly different in matters of discipline. Local acts of discipline may indeed be appealed from to higher ecclesiastical authority; but, until lawfully reversed, they may not be overridden through interference by other parts of the Church. See *Apost. Canons*. xii. and xiii.; *Sardican Canons*, xiii. On appeals of the clergy see *Chalcedon*, Can. ix.; and *African Code* of 419 A.D., xxviii., cxxv.

[3] For a bibliography of the proceedings of these Councils see above, p. 137, note 1.

[4] Its action was confirmed by a later Council of Carthage, 419 A.D.; and by the Quinisext Council of Constantinople, 692 A.D. The Council of Laodicea, about 363 A.D., had accepted all of the present list except the deutero-canonical books and Revelations. For text see Sanday, *Inspiration*, Lec. I., Note A, pp. 59–61.

rise of Pelagianism, which are admitted to express the mind of the whole Church.

(*c*) The Council of Toledo, 589 A.D., is supposed to have inserted the *filioque* clause into the Nicene Creed. This action has been concurred in by the entire Western Church, but is dissented from by the East. Its purpose was to vindicate the co-essentiality of the Son with the Father as against the Arianism of the Goths.[1]

(*d*) The Council of Frankfort, 794 A.D., declared that Christ is from eternity the Son of God by nature, and not by adoption. This expresses universal consent in the Church. It also rejected the Seventh Ecumenical Council under misapprehension.[2]

(*e*) The Council of Lyons, 1274 A.D., at which Greek Bishops met the Westerns, adopted a statement touching the *filioque*, that "the Holy Spirit proceedeth eternally from the Father and the Son, not as if from two principles, but as from one principle, not with two spirations but with one, *unica*, spiration." The East has not ratified this.

(*f*) The Council of Constance, A.D. 1418, declared that the whole Body and Blood of Christ are truly contained under the species bread and under the species wine in the Holy Eucharist. This doctrine of con-

[1] On the whole subject of the *filioque* and the action of this Council, see Pusey, *On the Clause "And the Son"*; Wilhelm and Scannell, *Manual*, Vol. I. pp. 296–307; Swete, *Hist. of the Doc. of the Procession;* Stone, *Outlines of Dogma*, pp. 28–30, 276–278; Percival, *Seven Ecum. Councils*, pp. 165–169.

[2] Cf. p. 138 (*g*) and note 1, above.

comitance, as it is called, is undoubtedly ecumenical, but the practice which the Council based upon it, of communicating the laity in one kind, is not accepted outside the papal obedience. It is contrary to the institution of Christ.

(*g*) At the Council of Florence, A.D. 1439, certain Greek prelates concurred with the Westerns in acknowledging that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, by which it was meant "that the Son as well as the Father is, according to the Greeks, a true Cause, according to the Latins a veritable Principle, of the subsistence of the Holy Spirit. And, since the Father giveth to the Son by His generation all that the Father hath, except His being the Father, the Son hath this eternally from the Father, that the Holy Spirit proceedeth from the Son." Such is the teaching of Scripture, but the feelings of the Easterns towards the Papal See led to their repudiation of the Council.[1]

(*h*) The Council of Trent is not received outside the papal obedience. But its importance to theologians is very great. Many of its definitions are valuable expressions of catholic consent, and in substantial agreement with Anglican formularies. In particular may be mentioned the definitions touching original sin and justification. On the other hand, this Council adopted certain scholastic opinions, including, for

[1] A convenient résumé of the teaching of the Eastern fathers on the procession of the Holy Spirit is given by Darwell Stone, *Outlines of Dogma*, note 3, pp. 276–278. Cf. Pusey, *On the Clause, "And the Son,"* pp. 108–150; and *Church Quarterly Review*, Jan. 1877, pp. 421–465.

example, that of transubstantiation, which do not command ecumenical consent.[1]

(*i*) The Eastern Church's formularies were adopted chiefly at the Councils of Jassy, in Moldavia, A.D. 1643, and Bethlehem, A.D. 1672. At the former Council, the Orthodox Confession of Peter Mogila was adopted in its final shape. At Bethlehem the *Orthodox Confession* was approved, as well as the *Answers of the Patriarch Jeremiah to the Lutherans*, composed in the sixteenth century. Certain acts were adopted and Eighteen Articles against the Calvinists.[2] The Synod of St. Petersburg, A.D. 1838, adopted a Russian version of these Articles, reducing to some extent, however, a certain approximation to Roman terminology touching transubstantiation. These formularies have great weight and are primary sources of information to those who seek to ascertain the lines of catholic consent in modern times.[3]

§ 9. Provincial formularies are binding upon the faithful in those portions of the Church which adopt

[1] The documents recognized by the Roman Church as authoritative in doctrine and morals are gathered, with a convenient index, in Denzinger's *Enchiridion Symbolorum Definitionum* — a volume of handy size. Ecumenical dogmas are, of course, included; and these constitute our meeting point. A brief survey is also given by Wilhelm and Scannell, *Manual*, Vol. I. § 36.

[2] See Robertson, *The Acts and Decrees of the Synod of Jerusalem, Sometimes Called the Council of Bethlehem . . . Translated from the Greek.*

[3] Oriental Councils and their decrees can be found in E. J. Kimmel's *Monumenta Fidei Ecclesiæ Orientalis*; and Hardouin's *Acta Conciliorum.*

and impose them; but always on the assumption that they do not conflict with the teaching of the universal Church.[1] It is the duty of the faithful to take this absence of conflict for granted, until evidence of disagreement is forthcoming. Theologians alone are competent to estimate the value of such evidence. So it is that Anglicans are bound to receive Anglican formularies, as well as those which have been imposed by the entire Church militant. The chief distinctive formularies now imposed by the Anglican Churches are the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion*, and the *Church Catechism*.

The Articles were framed for the use of the clergy.[2] But like all ecclesiastical formularies they are binding upon the laity to this extent, that no member of the faithful may repudiate the doctrinal teaching of his own portion of the Church, so long as it is not proved to be in conflict with ecumenical doctrine, or outside the range of the Church's teaching office.

Certain considerations need to be borne in mind, however, in accepting these Articles. In the first place, they were ostensibly framed as Articles of peace rather than as a Confession of Faith; and this determines the meaning of clerical subscription to them.[3] The reformation epoch was one full of peril to the English Church.

[1] Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. vii. § 2; and this volume, p. 140.

[2] Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. vii. §§ 3, 4, on their force and meaning.

[3] Such subscription is not required in the American Church, but their ecclesiastical authority is not based upon such subscription.

The reaction from papal tyranny and corruption was attended by much blind exasperation, and many were drifting away from the historic faith and order of the Church. Crude ideas were being put forward, and speculative questions, which in the nature of things could not be settled by precise definitions, were dividing the faithful into antagonistic parties, and threatening the utter destruction of the English Church. The chief thing which seemed to be immediately necessary was a cessation of needless controversy, and the assertion of those principles only which would carry the Church through the troublous times in which she was involved. Thus it was that the framers of the *Articles of Religion*, especially those who were responsible for their final shape,[1] refrained from precise definitions, except in those principles which were vital to the continuance of the ancient religion of the realm. The result is that many of the Articles are purposely vague and general, calculated to shelve controversy, rather than to decide the questions with which they deal. It is indisputable that Elizabeth and the leading members of Convocation desired to retain both the Marian

Their adoption by this Church as *Articles of Religion* "established by the Bishops, the Clergy, and the Laity of the Protestant Episcopal Church . . . in Convention, . . . on the twelfth day of September, in the year of our Lord, 1801" (see their title page), is sufficient to give them the status here claimed for them.

By reason of recent changes the English clergy "assent," rather than "subscribe," to the Articles. The difference does not affect our argument.

[1] Archbishop Parker and his associates, acting in sympathy with the expressed policy of Queen Elizabeth.

(Roman) and Calvinistic parties. Evidently the principle afterwards enunciated by royal authority in 1628, that the Articles are to be taken in their strict grammatical sense,[1] should be viewed as emphasizing the fact that no opinion should be read into the Articles which is not there explicitly and unambiguously set forth. The application of this principle shows indisputably that the Articles are neither Romish, nor Calvinistic, nor Lutheran in their purport; but constitute an eirenicon for all who are willing to adhere to the ancient catholic religion and avoid the propagation of disputatious opinions.[2]

[1] Printed in the English Prayer Book with the Articles. It says: "And that no man hereafter shall either print or preach to draw the article aside any way, but shall submit to it in the plain and full meaning thereof; and shall not put his own sense or comment to be the meaning of the article, but shall take it in the literal and grammatical sense." Such a declaration was not really needed to establish the generally acknowledged principle that legal enactments have no force as such beyond what they can be demonstrated, or are judicially determined, to mean.

This is not to resort to legal sophistry, or to reduce the scope of our loyalty to the Church's teaching, as some think. We are, of course, bound to accept the full mind of the Church, but loyalty requires us to ascertain *just what is* the mind of the Church in any given ecclesiastical utterance. Official documents show traces of the private views of those who framed them. It is our duty to discover whether, and how far, such views have been officially imposed; and the data by which this is determined are the words and phrases of the documents, interpreted according to their unambiguous and demonstrable meaning. This is a truism.

[2] It is faithfulness to this point of view that accounts for Laud's comparative indifference to conflicts of opinion, while rigidly enforcing external conformity. Whether wisely or no, he and his Elizabethan predecessors regarded enforcement of external conformity

On the other hand, foundation principles were carefully defined and insisted upon — that is, principles, an observance of which would preserve the faith and order of the Church. The doctrines which had been defined by the Ecumenical Councils were reasserted in terms calculated to exclude more recent and contemporary heresies. What was perhaps even more important in its immediate practical consequences, the rule of faith or formal principle of the Anglican reformation was carefully asserted. The Church was declared to have authority in controversies of faith;[1] and it was laid down that all necessary saving truth is contained in Holy Scripture, "so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to Salvation."[2] The Convocation of 1571, which adopted the Articles in their permanent shape, ordered that nothing should be taught by preachers as necessary to be believed, unless it was contained in Holy Scripture *and* had been drawn from Scripture by ancient writers and fathers.[3] The appeal to antiquity is the

to the Church's working system as the policy that would in due time remedy the doctrinal dangers of their age. They were not really indifferent to orthodoxy.

[1] Article XX. [2] Article VI.

[3] The Canon reads, "Imprimis vero videbunt, ne quid unquam doceant pro concione, quod a populo religiose teneri et credi velint, nisi quod consentaneum fit doctrinæ Veteris aut Novi Testamenti, quodque ex illa ipsa doctrina catholici patres, et veteres episcopi collegerint." Given in *Concilia Magnæ Brit. et Hibern.*, Vol. IV. p. 267.

characteristic principle of the Anglican Church,[1] and determines absolutely the point of view from which doubtful phrases in the Articles are to be regarded.[2] As was asserted by Queen Elizabeth in reply to the Papal See, no new religion was established in England at the time of the reformation.

§ 10. The *Church Catechism* is indisputably binding upon all Anglicans, for it is officially defined in its sub-title as "an instruction, to be learned by every person before he be brought to be confirmed by the Bishop." No one is required to subscribe to its contents in a formal way, it is true.[3] But the reason of this is clear. The Church exacts such subscriptions only of those who are capable of measuring the exact value of language. The faith which she requires of the multitude is implicit, to "believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith." This faith must be accepted without mental reservations, however, and with humble recognition of the teaching office of the Church.

The Catechism exhibits some notable omissions. But this is due to the fact that the larger scheme of

[1] See below, note at the end of § 2, ch. viii.

[2] On the whole subject of the authority of the Articles, see Palmer, *The Church*, Pt. IV. ch. xiv. Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. vii. §§ 3, 4. The position here taken was reasserted after eighteenth century obscuration by Tract XC, and is that of Bishop Forbes and most recent commentators on the Articles.

[3] Formal subscription does not create the obligation of conformity to the Church's teaching, as contained in her formularies. Its purpose is to assure the Church that the subscriber understands, and is ready to fulfil, what is required. It corresponds to the vows made at Baptism and Confirmation.

which it was a part was never carried out.[1] As it stands, however, it is sufficient, when received with a docile spirit, to draw the learner on to an implicit acceptance of all catholic doctrine.

§ 11. Anglicans are bound in two directions. As baptized members of the Catholic Church they should accept implictly the faith of the Church universal. As Anglicans, providential circumstances require them to assume that whatever their own portion of the Church imposes by way of doctrine is catholic doctrine, until it is clearly demonstrated to be otherwise. This double principle binds the clergy as well as the laity. "The Church hath . . . authority in Controversies of Faith," and the Church exercises its authority over *us* through the Anglican body. The teaching authority of a provincial Church over its members is indisputable, until the Church in question has forfeited its claim to be a true portion of the Catholic Church; that is, until it has demonstrably forsaken the faith or has lost the apostolic ministry and sacraments.[2]

[1] It was intended in the time of Edward VI. and Elizabeth to have a more elaborate Catechism for students in the public schools. Such a Catechism was drawn up in Edward's time, ascribed to Bishop Ponet. As this was not considered satisfactory, the Bishops decided in 1561 to have two advanced Catechisms — one for communicants, and another in Latin for schools. Nowell's *Catechism*, intended for schools, was amended and approved in 1562 by Convocation; but formal sanction was deferred in view of a plan, never carried out, to embody with it in one official volume the *Articles of Religion* and *Jewell's Apology*. See Frere, *Hist. of the Prayer Book*, pp. 601, 602.

[2] See Darwell Stone's admirable words on the teaching authority of the Anglican Church, in *Outlines of Dogma*, pp. 146–148; and Pusey's larger defence, *The Church of England a Portion of Christ's . . . Church* (*Eirenicon*, Pt. I.), esp. the earlier parts.

III. *The Papal See*

§ 12. It was pointed out in our discussion of oral tradition,[1] that at an early date the doctrinal traditions of the Roman Church acquired a cosmopolitan and representative importance by reason of the constant influx of clergy and laity from other Churches to the capital of the Roman empire. The effect of this was twofold: to push the Roman See forward into the position of the most important guardian of the traditional faith, and to afford to that See occasion and temptation to make excessive claims for itself — claims that became greater as the ages rolled on.

The success of the Bishops of Rome in increasing their influence throughout the Church, and in making their claims effective in the West, can be accounted for by a combination of circumstances which, although providential, by no means justify the Vatican theory: — that the Bishop of Rome is constituted *by divine appointment* to be the supreme head of the Church on earth, with authority to determine all controversies of faith and morals: and that he is endowed with infallibility in his *ex cathedra* decisions, so that these decisions bind all the faithful *ex sese*, independently of their ratification by the Church at large.[2]

We do not deny that the Roman see has been divinely

[1] See pp. 122, 123, above.

[2] See Session IV. cap. iv. of the Vatican Council, passed July 18, 1870. The pertinent part reads, "Sacro approbante Concilio, docemus et divinitus revelatum dogma esse definimus: Romanum Pontificem, cum ex Cathedra loquitur, id est, cum omnium Christianorum

assisted and guided to do great things for the Church: — in particular, to pilot the Western Church through dark ages, and to save it from divisions of interests that, without such piloting, would apparently have been fatal. Moreover, we are quite unprepared to admit that the Roman See has apostatized, or that it has no future work to do in the ecumenical sphere. Believing as we do, that that See has made itself responsible for grave evils, and that its present claims cannot be accepted by us without betrayal of truth, we acknowledge that it is still achieving great things for God, and that it has a future with which all who desire our Lord's prayer for unity to be answered must reckon.

§ 13. Among the human causes of the rise of papal power in the Church are the following:[1]

(*a*) As has already been stated,[2] a Church which was located at the centre of travel naturally and inevitably became the chief emporium of catholic tradition, so that its utterances soon came to have greater weight in the comparison of ecclesiastical traditions than those of any other local Church. That Church was certain

Pastoris et Doctoris munere fungens pro suprema sua Apostolica auctoritate doctrinam de fide vel moribus ab universa Ecclesia tenendam definit, per assistentiam divinam, ipsi in beato Petro promissam, ea infallibilitate pollere, qua divinus Redemptor Ecclesiam suam in definienda doctrina de fide vel moribus instructam esse volint; ideoque ejusmodi Romani Pontificis definitiones ex sese, non autem ex consensu Ecclesiæ, irreformabiles esse." Given in Denzinger, *Enchiridion Symbolorum*, § 1682.

[1] See Salmon, *Infallibility*, pp. 370 *et seq.*, on this subject.

[2] See above, pp. 122, 123, 150.

under orthodox bishops to become the most important and powerful Church in Christendom.[1]

(*b*) It was customary in the early Church to honour what were called apostolic sees — those that had been founded by one or other of the original twelve apostles. And such sees exercised an influence, none the less real because informal in acknowledgment, that was much greater in individual instances than other circumstances warranted. Moreover, the Roman See was the only apostolic See in the West, and on that account wielded greater influence than seemingly it would have exercised otherwise.

(*c*) Under such circumstances it required no supernatural warrant to justify the Council of Sardica in conferring on the Roman Bishop the new prerogative — the language employed shows that it was new — of receiving appeals, and of intervening in the affairs of other Churches to the limited extent of securing fresh proceedings in the Church where the case appealed originated.[2] It was also natural that certain emperors

[1] Roberston, in *Ch. Hist. Soc. Lecs.*, 2nd Series, pp. 211–223, discusses this, and shows that the Roman Bishop gained his position by reason of the human importance of his See, and that the Petrine claim was not the original cause.

[2] A recent semi-Arian Council at Antioch had, in the interests of semi-Arianism, forbidden appeals beyond the local province. To remedy this the Council of Sardica decreed, with conscious reference to any one thus hindered from maintaining orthodoxy, "Let us, if you please, honour the memory of the apostle Peter; and let him write to Julius, Bishop of Rome, who, if he thinks fit, may order the case to be tried again, and appoint judges to try it." The Council is obviously *conferring* appellate jurisdiction, and that of limited

should confirm and enlarge the prerogatives of the Roman See — that is, so far as secular authority was able to do this. Whatever may be thought of such secular interference, its effect was momentous.[1] It should be added that the Popes of the Nicene age were very able statesmen, and stretched the meaning of the Sardican canon in practice beyond its actual significance.

(*d*) The downfall of the Western Empire left the Bishop of Rome in possession. He became the strong man of the West — the one force that could be counted on to maintain order and civilization, and the inheritor of the traditional reverence which was paid by Roman and barbarian alike to the august name of Rome.[2] Meantime the only possible rival — the Bishop of new Rome or Constantinople — was overshadowed in his own neighbourhood by the Eastern Emperor; and that Emperor was too remote from Italy to check the political advance of such a Pope, for example, as Gregory the Great.

(*e*) The Pope under these circumstances became a secular prince, and ruled over considerable territories; and he fortified his position by recognition of, and alliance with, the Franks, who were rapidly becoming the strongest secular force in the West. In due season

nature. The Canon is given in Hardouin and other collections, *e.g.* Percival, pp. 416, 417. For discussions, see Puller, *Prim. Saints*, pp. 140–144; Bright, *Roman See*, pp. 85–91.

[1] See Legge, *The Growth of the Temporal Power of the Papacy*, ch. i. The whole work is valuable.

[2] Bryce, *Holy Roman Empire*, revised ed., pp. 16–47, *passim*.

this alliance gave birth to the Holy Roman empire, in which the papal claims were supported by the rulers of western Europe, who leaned on the Roman See for a sacred sanction of their empire.[1]

(*f*) Such conditions had the effect of subjecting every western interest to the Papal See.[2] The validity of its spiritual claims was acknowledged as a matter of course in the unscholarly ages that followed; and the fictions with which these claims came to be fortified were generally accepted.[3] Moreover, the nature of the whole situation imparted a consistency to papal policy which enabled the Roman See to profit by every political conflict in the Empire, and to become the effective

[1] Church's *Beginnings of the Middle Ages*, Emerton's *Introd. to the Study of the Middle Ages*, and Bryce's *Holy Roman Empire* (revised ed.) give, *passim*, satisfactory accounts of the formation of this alliance.

[2] Missionaries derived their prestige, and consequent chances of success among the barbarians, from their having been sent by the ruler of the eternal city. The subsequent subjection of the new Churches to a papal supremacy — not less real because undefined — was inevitable. The missions of Augustine to Britain (followed by the organizing work of Theodore), and of Boniface to Germany, afford notable instances.

[3] For instance, the *Donation of Constantine*, extracts from which are preserved in Gratian, *Corpus Juris Can.*, Dist. xcvi. cc. 13, 14, quoted by Bryce, *Holy Roman Empire*, pp. 514–515; and the *False Decretals*. These latter consisted of additions to a genuine collection made by Isidore of Spain. They were forged in Gaul in the interests of inferior sees and against the excessive power of metropolitans. But they proved to be a convenient support for the claims of Nicholas I., who made use of them, innocently no doubt, and without inquiring into their genuineness. See Bryce, *op. cit.*, pp. 156, 196, 197; Blunt, *Dic. of Theol.*, *s. v.* "Decretals, False."

arbiter, not only of spiritual concerns, but between princes and kings as well.[1]

The result was as inevitable as its historic causes were human. No one was powerful enough or learned enough to gainsay the Pope; and arguments that had never convinced the East came to be accepted without question throughout the West — in particular the appeal to our Lord's alleged declaration that Peter was the rock on which He would build His Church. And the facts require us to acknowledge that, whatever resistance may have been shown at times to papal commands, the English were practically at one with their Western brethren in acknowledging the Petrine claim of Rome during the Middle Ages.[2] They never faced the question fully, and the extent of papal prerogative was not clearly defined in their minds. That they considered it to be limited is shown by many events,[3] but that they considered it to be divinely appointed is as certain as any fact of mediæval history.

[1] Gregory VII. (Hildebrand) humbled Henry IV. of Germany, at Canosa (1077 A.D.), and Innocent III. (1198–1216 A.D.) raised the political power of his See to its climax. Boniface VIII. (1294–1303 A.D.) pressed his claims beyond what even that age was ready for, and his defeat initiated a decline of papal power; which, however, revived somewhat in the fifteenth century.

[2] Thus at the Conference of Whitby, 664 A.D., the Roman usages were preferred to the Celtic on the plea advanced by Wilfrid, that the keys of the kingdom of heaven had been given to Peter. Bede, *Eccles. Hist.*, III. 25.

[3] For example, the refusal of Theodore to restore Wilfrid at the Pope's bidding, and the statutes against papal abuses in the fourteenth century.

No one, however, then maintained the modern Vatican position.[1]

§ 14. To deny that the position and power of the Papal See during the Middle Ages was providentially ordered seems exceedingly precarious. Without denying the power of God to employ other instruments, we believe the facts plainly show that He did employ the Roman See to save some remnants of ancient civilization, to bring order out of chaos, to unify and make effective the work of evangelizing the barbarians, and to restrain and Christianize our pagan forefathers; in short, to save the Church in Europe from extinction. All this ought duly to be acknowledged by those who seek to arrive at just conclusions concerning papal claims.

The Roman See has been occupied at times by wicked and ambitious men, and several of its occupants have sided with heretical interests. But the record of that See has none the less been a glorious one, and therefore we are not surprised at the continued acknowledgment of its claims by a large section of the Church, even in their Vatican form.

§ 15. In undertaking to summarize our reasons for rejecting the claim of the Bishop of Rome to exercise the dogmatic office of the Church, a preliminary consideration should be emphasized. The point at issue

[1] To question papal claims altogether would have required in that age and in the West a mental freedom which the conditions did not afford. Acquiescence, however, was confined to the West — to those who were under the heel, or at least the glamour, of papal power.

is not one of human arrangement. The Church may, of course, make use of the Pope as her agent in making dogmatic decisions, and may permit him to exercise a real executive headship over her concerns in this world. But she may alter or displace machinery of her own appointment, and she is certainly not debarred from considering and determining by other than papal means whether the decisions of official agents are consistent with her faith.

The issue is really concerned with the assertion that the Roman See exercises the supreme *magisterium* and the dogmatic office by express divine appointment, so that papal decisions *ex cathedra* are not subject to reversal or modification even by the universal Church.[1] Divine appointment of this kind is not a growth but a fact of history. If it were a growth, no one could say, without express divine revelation, that it might not grow on; and become, for instance, a limited primacy, such as could be accepted without inconsistency

[1] It is said that what the Vatican decree really means is that, as a final court of appeal, the Papal See in fact registers the mind of the universal Church. When the Pope has spoken *ex cathedra* the universal Church has spoken. *Causa finita est.* See Carson, *Reunion Essays*, p. 99, who cites Ryder to the same effect. The answer is clear. The universal Church has never conceded such absolute judicial authority to the Pope. This is a question of fact. It is the Church's duty to maintain the faith, *in any event;* and she is not at liberty to nullify her freedom to do this by any machinery whatever. She must be free to overrule the judgments of her official agents, or else abandon her claim to supreme "authority in Controversies of Faith." She cannot delegate this authority absolutely, so as to be unable to resume it, without unfaithfulness to her divinely appointed stewardship.

by all portions of the Church.[1] In brief, the question is one of fact simply. Did our Lord appoint St. Peter, and his successors in the Roman See, to the position now claimed by the Papal See, and endow them with peculiar infallibility?[2]

What our mediæval forefathers thought does not of itself settle the matter. Their view was both provincial and uncritical. Claims could not be discussed fruitfully when excommunication awaited dissentients, and physical penalties as well. It is significant, however, that the very first formal consideration of the alleged divine right of papal supremacy, in the Convocation of 1534, led to its rejection.[3]

§ 16. Limitations of space compel us to give our reasons for rejecting Vatican claims very concisely.[4]

[1] We shall return to the growth theory in § 20 (*b*) of this chapter. It is not generally maintained by Roman Catholic writers, but Newman broached it, in *Development of Doctrine*, ch. iv. § iii., and it has been urged of late by Carson, *Reunion Essays*, ch. i.; and Loisy, *The Gospel and the Church*.

[2] Bright, *See of Rome in the Early Church*, pp. 2–8, and Puller, *Prim. Saints*, revised ed., pp. 1–5, bring this out.

[3] It is idle to object that the members of Convocation acted under royal dictation. They had shown their independence and courage by refusing to acknowledge Henry's claim to be "Supreme Head," until that phrase had been qualified in such wise as to preserve the supremacy of the hierarchy in spirituals. For the fullest account of these matters, see Dixon, *Hist. of the Church of England*, Vol. I.

[4] Fuller discussions are abundant. Among the older standard works may be mentioned Laud, *Conference with Fisher*; Field, *The Church*, Bk. V. chh. xxiii., xxiv., xxxii.–xlvii.; Ussher, *Answer to a Jesuit's Challenge;* Isaac Barrow, *The Pope's Supremacy;* Crakenthorp, *Defensio Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ*. Later discussions are found in

(*a*) In the first place, it is a fatal flaw in these claims that they are not primitive, either in origin or acceptance; and that they have never received the acceptance of the entire Catholic Church. The Eastern Churches have rejected them all along, and the Anglican Church has never accepted them with deliberate formality in any shape, or even impliedly in their modern form.[1] The plea that Vaticanism is the result of legitimate

Palmer, *The Church*, Pt. VII.; Salmon, *Infallibility of the Church;* A. Robertson in *Ch. Hist. Soc. Lecs.*, 2nd Series, V.; and especially Puller, *Primitive Saints*, revised ed., and Bright, *Roman See.* The latest Roman methods of argument may be studied in Rivington, *Primitive Church and the See of Peter;* Carson, *Reunion Essays;* Dom. Chapman, *Bp. Gore and the Catholic Claims;* McNabb, *Infallibility.*

[1] Bright, *Roman See*, and Puller, *Prim. Saints*, revised ed., discuss the question of acceptance of papal claims in some detail. Cf. Salmon, *Infallibility*, pp. 376 *et seq.*; Robertson, in *Ch. Hist. Soc. Lecs.*, 2nd Series, pp. 211 *et seq.*; Pusey, *Eirenicon*, Vol. III., pp. 180–327. Rivington, *Prim. Church*, tries to show that the ancients acknowledged the Papal See as supreme; and Waterworth, *Faith of Catholics*, Vol. II. pp. 2–112, gives patristic catenas in the same interest. Among those who have accepted the papal rule since the reformation, many have rejected the distinctive elements of the Vatican position; *e.g.* Bossuet and the Gallicans. Cardinal Veron, *Regula Fidei*, cap. i. § 4, denies that papal utterances, even *ex cathedra*, are in themselves sufficient to impose an article of catholic faith. Cf. cap. ii. § 15. He died in 1646. In a pastoral issued by the Roman hierarchy of Ireland, 1826, the words occur, "It is not an article of the Catholic Faith, nor are we thereby required to believe, that the Pope is infallible." Keenan's well-known catechism, prior to its revision after the Vatican Council, declared the doctrine of papal infallibility to be "a protestant invention, and it is no article of the Catholic Faith. No decision of his can oblige under pain of heresy, unless it be received by the teaching body — that is by the Bishops of the Church."

development[1] is nullified by the fact that the papal claim is expressly based on divine appointment — not a subject of growth. Moreover, this development has been confined to a part of the Church, and has been proved not to be catholic by its consistent repudiation in the Churches which have been in a position to consider the question with real freedom.[2] The Vatican decree on infallibility mentions an "infallibility wherewith Christ has endowed His Church." That infallibility has not permitted the Catholic Church in its corporate entirety to accept papal claims; nor has she in practice resorted to the Papal See in defining her faith, but has employed the more elaborate and difficult procedure of General Councils. Moreover, these Councils have not accepted papal documents without careful examination of them on their merits.[3]

§ 17. (*b*) The mind of the Catholic Church is determined by traditions which began before the New Testament was written, and it may be trusted in relation to facts of such fundamental bearing as are at issue in this controversy. But, none the less, Holy Scripture is the fullest source of information touching our Lord's

[1] Cf. above, pp. 157, 158; and below, § 20 (*b*).

[2] The Vatican Council itself was not really free. Papal pressure was too much in evidence, and it is certain that many yielded to it very unwillingly. The state of opinion just previous to the Council is graphically exhibited in Wilfrid Ward's, *Wm. Geo. Ward and the Catholic Revival*, esp. ch. x.

[3] Even the glorious *Tome* of Leo on the Incarnation was refused ratification at Chalcedon until it had been examined and discussed in detail. See Bright, *See of Rome*, pp. 185–189; Hefele, *Hist. of the Councils*, §§ 190, 192.

appointments. We maintain that papal claims are not borne out by the New Testament.[1]

The texts chiefly relied on illustrate our contention. Thus, it is not certain that Peter is the rock to which our Lord referred in the most notable of these passages;[2] and the ancient writers who so interpreted it did not usually treat it as signifying a permanent headship in the Church, to be transmitted to Peter's successors. The promise of the power of binding and loosing was in the event fulfilled by its bestowal upon the whole apostolic band.[3] Coming to the next passage, if Peter was urged to strengthen the brethren when he had been converted,[4] surely no unique prerogative was involved in doing this.[5] Finally, considering the third passage, the three-

[1] The scriptural argument is discussed by Jeremy Taylor, *Liberty of Prophesying*, § vii. 2–11; Jackson, *Works*, Bk. III. chh. vii., viii.; Salmon, *Infallibility*, pp. 332 *et seq.*; Robertson, in *Ch. Hist. Soc. Lecs.*, 2nd Series, pp. 206–211; Gore, *Roman Cath. Claims*, ch. v.; Palmer, *The Church*, Pt. VII. ch. i. Roman Catholic arguments can be found in Wilberforce, *Prins. of Church Authority*, chh. vii.–ix.; Dom Chapman, *Bp. Gore and the Cath. Claims*, ch. v.; McNabb, *Infallibility*, Pt. I. Waterworth gives a patristic catena in the same interest, in *Faith of Catholics*, Vol. I. pp. 331–340.

[2] St. Matt. xvi. 16–19. On the division of opinion amongst the fathers, see Palmer, *The Church*, Vol. II. pp. 483–487; Salmon, *Infallibility*, pp. 334 *et seq.*

[3] St. Matt. xviii. 17, 18; xix. 28. Cf. 1 Cor. iii. 11; Ephes. ii. 20.

[4] St. Luke xxii. 31–34.

[5] The word for strengthen, στηρίζειν, is used to describe St. Paul's work for his Churches, and similar labours of Judas and Silas at Antioch, and of Timothy at Thessalonica, Acts xiv. 22; xv. 32, 41; xviii. 23. St. Paul even proposes to strengthen, στηριχθῆναι, those at Rome itself. Rom. i. 11. "The care of all the Churches" (2 Cor. xi. 28), however taken, is a strange phrase for St. Paul to use in

fold charge to feed Christ's sheep [1] is too obviously a restoration to the apostolate after the threefold betrayal to be interpreted as the conferring of an office on Peter in which the rest of the apostles were to have no share.[2]

In order to establish papal claims from Scripture, it is first necessary to furnish proof therefrom that Peter received from Christ an office of leadership in the apostolic band. We do not deny this for one moment. But it must also be shown that this office was equivalent in real authority, whatever lack of formality may have attended its exercise, to that attributed by the Vatican Council to the Papal See; for if the Papal See has taken to itself more authority than Peter possessed, such authority has a later origin and is not received through Peter. But we do not find that Peter was conscious of possessing anything more than a personal leadership among equals. Certainly he possessed no other infallibility than the pentecostal inspiration in which the other apostles shared. Our Lord's promise of indefectibility, although addressed to him, was made to the Church at large; [3] and when St. Paul gives a list of the

describing his own responsibilities, if St. Peter had been given this prerogative. Its real meaning appears in the light of the apostolic recognition that the Gospel of the uncircumcision was committed to St. Paul, as that of the circumcision was to St. Peter. Gal. ii. 7–9. The care of the Gentilic Churches was given to St. Paul in the same manner as the care of the Jewish Churches was given to St. Peter. See Salmon, *Infallibility of the Church*, pp. 342–345.

[1] St. John xxi. 15–17. "Lambs" is used once.

[2] Cf. Acts xx. 28; 1 Cor. iv. 1; 2 Cor. xi. 5; xii. 11.

[3] "The gates of hades shall not prevail against *it*," αὐτῆς. St. Matt. xvi. 18.

Church's ministries, he gives the first rank expressly to the apostles, not to Peter.[1] In short, to be "chief" of the apostles [2] did not mean to occupy a higher office than the rest, but simply a personal leadership among peers. The "chief corner stone" was not Peter, who is classed with the rest, but "Christ Himself." [3]

It needs to be proved, thirdly, that our Lord instituted Peter's office, whatever it was, to be a permanent office in the Church militant, and to be transmitted to successors in every generation. There is absolutely no evidence of this. Finally it needs to be shown that the distinctive office of Peter was actually transmitted to, and permanently lodged in, the hands of the Bishops of Rome, to be possessed and exercised by them until the end.[4] That the Bishops of Rome have been reckoned as the successors of Peter *par excellence* is indisputable, but this is due to *ex post facto* and human accidents in the rise of papal power which we have

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 28.

[2] 2 Cor. xi. 5; xii. 11. The phrase is really "the chief apostles," *τῶν ὑπερλίαν ἀποστόλων.*

[3] Ephes. ii. 20. Cf. the twelve thrones, St. Matt. xix. 28, which are promised to the apostles on equal terms. Bearing in mind a curious bit of recent exegesis, we grant that it is not unfitting that the leader of the apostles should be honoured in the Apocalypse, xxi. 18–19, by an assimilation of the symbol — jasper — which represents him among the twelve apostolic foundations, to the material of the superimposed walls of the heavenly city. That his leadership is thus mystically referred to is possible, but that this leadership lifts him out of the intrinsic rank of the rest is not apparent.

[4] On these two parts of the argument from Scripture, see Palmer, *The Church*, Pt. VII. ch. ii; Beveridge, *Works*, Vol. I. p. 123; Jeremy Taylor, *Liberty of Prophesying*, § vii. 8; Salmon, *Infallibility*, p. 333.

already considered. Certainly other ancient sees share with Rome in the Petrine succession, and no scriptural evidence can be given that the Roman succession carries with it any unique prerogative, not transmitted, for instance, to the See of Antioch.

In brief, while Scripture shows that our Lord and the apostles recognized St. Peter's leadership among the twelve, there is no evidence of his possessing the tremendous prerogatives which we are considering; or that such prerogatives, if he possessed them, were to be transmitted by divine arrangement to a line of successors; or that the Roman See was to be the divinely appointed throne of such successors.

§ 18. (*c*) Our third general reason for rejecting the Vatican claims is that the system of authority which is involved fails to work. This failure appears in several particulars.

i. The official actions and utterances of the Papal See have at times been made and performed in heretical interests. We mention only a few notorious instances. Liberius certainly identified himself with Arian interests at a critical moment.[1] Pope Damasus at first acquitted Pelagius, and then changed his attitude under pressure.[2] Honorius wrote official letters that were

[1] This is generally acknowledged, *e.g.* by Dom. Chapman, *Bp. Gore and the Cath. Claims*, p. 38. "If Liberius momentarily fell, he was firm both before and after."

[2] This is met by the contention that his error concerned fact only, viz. that Pelagius taught the errors attributed to him. That such was the limit of his error was not obvious to the African Synod that resisted his decision, nor is it to historical students.

generally taken as committing him to a judgment that Monothelitism was not heretical; and he was anathematized as a heretic not only by the sixth Ecumenical Council, but also by each of his papal successors for centuries.[1] The reply that these utterances were not *ex cathedra* is not satisfactory, since it draws attention to a second line of failure of the Vatican system to work.

ii. This is the impossibility of laying down a practical rule for distinguishing *ex cathedra* utterances which will be consistent with the Vatican assertion that these utterances are irreformable *ex sese, non autem ex consensu ecclesiæ.* One would naturally suppose that an *ex cathedra* utterance meant any official one, intended to possess the doctrinal authority of the Papal See.[2] If such were its meaning it would be hard to exclude from such a category the letter of Honorius. Roman writers repudiate it, however, but are not agreed as to what precisely does distinguish an *ex cathedra*

[1] The Roman Catholic Hefele, *Hist. of the Councils*, Bk. XVI. §§ 296, 298, 320, 324, treats of the case at length. He says, "That the sixth Œcumenical Synod actually condemned Honorious on account of heresy, is clear beyond all doubt." He mentions the *Liber Diurnus* as containing the oath which each new Pope had to take, that "he recognized the sixth Œcumenical Council, which smote with eternal anathema the originators of the new heresy [their names follow], together with Honorius, *quia pravis hæreticorum assertionibus fomen tum impendit.*" Cf. *Dic. of Christian Biog., s. v.* "Honorius"; Salmon, *Infallibility*, pp. 433, 434, 439–442. The anathema was published in the Breviary until the sixteenth century. There is something grotesque in calling an infallible Pope a heretic.

[2] So Salmon, *Infallibility*, pp. 250, 434–439.

pronouncement.[1] In any case, the rarity of such papal utterances as Roman Catholics will acknowledge to be *ex cathedra* — no others are said by them to be infallible — is remarkable, in view of the insistence that the Church must have a living voice, one which is able to afford infallible definitions in times of confusion.[2]

§ 19. (*d*) Finally, we reject the Vatican claim because it subverts the working of that infallibility wherewith, as the Vatican decree itself acknowledges, "the divine Redeemer willed that His Church should be endowed." Thus, by making the *ex cathedra* definitions of the Pope irreformable, and that apart from the consent of the Church at large, the supreme prerogative of the Church to be the judge of her own mind is brought to an end. It is not a satisfactory reply that papal definitions are

[1] Darwell Stone, *Christian Church*, pp. 376–385, gives some of the more important views of Roman writers. Carson, *Reunion Essays*, II., so multiplies the conditions necessary to be fulfilled that he is driven to limit such utterances to the *Tome* of Leo and the definition of the immaculate conception of the Blessed Virgin. It is to be added that one of these two, the *Tome* of Leo, was not addressed to the whole Church — a condition usually required by Roman writers. But can a system of teaching be said to work which only twice fulfils its own requirements in nineteen centuries?

[2] It may be replied that we are equally helpless; but such is not the case, for we recognize that the living voice of the Church does not need to be uttered at all times in the form of fresh definitions, but gains sufficient and effective utterance in the normal working system of the Church, and in what the Church continues to enforce every where. It is the *a priori* assumption that more than this is essential which makes the non-working value of the *ex cathedra* system so apparent and so damaging.

in reality the Church's own utterances in her final court of appeal.[1] That court of appeal may fail to work correctly, and the Church cannot be deprived by her agents of the right and duty to be herself the final court of appeal, in such case.

The Vatican system is inevitably provincial in working, and Italian Rome is no longer the microcosm of the intellectual life of the Church, as it was in the days of Irenæus, but is dominated by a *Curia* which exhibits conspicuous incapacity to understand anything that innovates upon its own scholastic and purely provincial traditions.[2] A system that hampers every effort to face modern knowledge and criticism frankly, and shuts up the ablest scholars to a blind submission in matters that lie beyond the proper sphere of the Church's dogmatic office, must necessarily bring ecclesiastical authority into disrepute, unless bravely disowned.

§ 20. The glamour of Rome appeals to persons of a certain temperament very powerfully. But what

[1] So Carson in effect, *Reunion Essays*, p. 99. He cites Dr. Ryder as saying, "Although the *consensus ecclesiæ* is banished from the *ratio essendi* of papal infallibility, it remains still largely a factor in the *ratio cogniscendi*." That is, the recognition of an *ex cathedra* decision does not validate it, but enables us to identify it. "And did we lack it," Ryder adds, "We might in certain cases suspect failure." This either means nothing, or an acknowledgment that catholic consent after all has the final word.

[2] The encyclical on Modernism, recently issued by Pius X., was undoubtedly framed by the Pope's Italian advisers, although it has his authority. Its effect has been to raise questions that are very grave indeed.

rational plausibility the Roman argument possesses is very largely due to *a priori* assumptions, upon which its validity depends, but which need only to be defined to appear insufficient. Some of these have been treated of, either directly or indirectly, in previous sections of this volume. For example: (*a*) that the Church's voice is not really "living," unless able to issue fresh dogmatic definitions at will;[1] (*b*) that the Catholic Church and the papal obedience are conterminous, as if the papal system had been proved to be of the *esse* of the Church — the very point at issue; (*c*) that submission to the Church's authority — more specifically, to the Papal See — must inevitably end all confusion and doubt, and bring peace.[2] There are, however, two matters that ought to be touched upon, which have not yet received notice.

(*a*) It is urged, *a priori*, that the Church being a visible organism, its Head should belong to the same order of life with the body. The Head must also be visible.[3] The fallacy of this becomes obvious when we substitute "earthly" for "visible," for that is the sense in which the term is used. The Church referred

[1] See above, ch. iv. § 7; and below, ch. viii. § 4.

[2] See above, ch. iii. § 14 (*e*). The alleged internal unity and peace of the Roman Communion are only apparent, and due to severe repressive discipline. There are signs to-day, however, of grave unrest, and the history of the last three centuries shows that such unrest is recurrent. See Palmer, *The Church*, Vol. I. App. I.–IV.

[3] Urged by Rivington, *Authority*, p. 5; replied to by Gore, *Roman Cath. Claims*, ch. ii.; to whom Dom Chapman gives a rejoinder, *Bp. Gore and the Cath. Claims, ch.* ii. See also Carson, *Reunion Essays*, p. 110.

to is only a part of the organism. It is the Church militant; and unless we assume mistakenly, that the Church militant is an organism by itself, complete and self-sufficient apart from the rest of the body mystical, the argument is futile. It should be restated as follows: The Church militant ought to be free from schism and division of interests, if her intrinsic sacramental unity in Christ is to be apparent to the world, and if her propaganda is to prosper. This, of course, is true. But the external manner of securing visible unity to the Church on earth was not defined by Christ, and may vary. The Vatican manner has never been accepted by the Catholic Church. On the contrary, the approximations towards Vaticanism of the ages gone by have been the chief formal cause of the schisms which we now lament.[1] If true charity prevailed everywhere, the problem of visible unity could be solved by any one of various external arrangements; and without such charity no method whatever will succeed.. The fatal objection to the Vatican method is that it hands over to the control of one fallible See and *Curia* interests that have been intrusted by Christ to the entire Church. This is why all questions as to the righteousness of our break with Rome in the

[1] We do not forget other causes: *e.g.* racial jealousies between East and West; political interests helping on the Anglican break with Rome; and, as determining the particular moment of the break, the will of Henry VIII. We believe that, however deplorable, the break, quite apart from the King's action, was inevitable. We are further convinced that neither of the schisms above mentioned would have occurred if papal claims had not exceeded due warrant.

sixteenth century are now purely academic. The Vatican Council has created a new situation; and, until its definitions have been abandoned, either by repeal or by interpretation into inconsequence,[1] submission on our part to papal government would be a betrayal of the dogmatic office of the Church.

(*b*) The other point to be noticed is the alleged immutability of the papal system. It is said that this immutability is the very key-note of the Vatican position, and pertains to its *esse*. Those who urge this forget to distinguish between the Roman Church and Vaticanism. Vaticanism is but a human phenomenon in the history of the Roman See. No doubt, it cannot change and live. But the death of Vaticanism does not involve the death of the Roman Church; nor will it stultify any future prelates who may become instrumental in emancipating that Church from its present nightmare.[2]

The truth is that nothing human is immutable; and it is impossible to regard the present position of the Roman See as irreformable, except on the assumption which we have given reasons for repudiating — that

[1] Such interpretation has already begun to be made by Roman Catholic apologists. See Darwell Stone, *Christian Church*, ch. xiii. XI., XIII.; Carson, *Reunion Essays*, II. But the development of this interpretation must become general, and beyond reasonable possibility of reversal, before the difficulty created by Vaticanism will cease to be insuperable. On the change of situation caused by the Vatican decree, see Forbes, *XXXIX. Articles*, 2nd edition, pp. 822 *et seq.*

[2] Succeeding generations in the Church of Rome will not be responsible for the position which they inherit; and will, therefore, be able to reform it without inconsistency.

Vaticanism defines what Christ has appointed. The Papal See must adjust its position and methods, so far as they are of human growth, to the changing conditions, the advancing civilization, and the increasing spiritual intelligence of the people on whose allegiance its continuance absolutely depends. It must do this or die. That is, it must outgrow Vaticanism. We believe that it will; and that it has a future, by reason of such readjustment of attitude, with which we must some day reckon.

Our present duty in the Anglican Church is to recover to the full the ecumenical spirit, and to manifest more and more our devotion and loyalty to the rich heritage which we share with the rest of the Catholic Church. As things are, we have a great work to achieve — to make clear to those who would serve Christ, but have unconsciously missed the way, the real nature and priceless value of the Catholic Religion which Christ established for all time, and for them as well as for us.

CHAPTER VI

BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

I. *Inspiration*

§ 1. We have somewhat anticipated the subject before us in treating of ecclesiastical authority, and in this treatise we are directly concerned only with such aspects of the Scriptures as are germane to Dogmatic Theology. Our discussions, therefore, will be comparatively brief.

The following premises have been set forth in the previous chapters:

(*a*) The Scriptures constitute, in connection with the Church, one of the two primary immediate sources of saving truth, and possess a derivative divine authority.[1]

(*b*) The Scriptures contain, either explicitly or implicitly, all doctrine necessary to be believed for salvation: so that, whereas it is the appointed function of the Church to teach and define such doctrine, the Scriptures confirm and illustrate what the Church teaches; and nothing may be regarded as necessary to be believed which cannot be found therein, or proved thereby.[2]

[1] See above, ch. iii. § 2.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 67, 68.

(*c*) Since the same Spirit who inspires the Scriptures also guides the Church into all truth, it is impossible that the whole Church should impose any doctrine as necessary to be believed for salvation, which cannot be proved by the Scriptures; and the Church's faith will always be found to furnish the true key to the fundamental purport of the Scriptures.[1]

(*d*) As containing the sacred deposit of truth which the Church began to teach in apostolic days, the Scriptures constitute a primary vehicle of the tradition of that deposit, and a sure means of verifying the agreement of present-day ecclesiastical teaching with the faith of pentecostal days.[2]

In this and the next chapter we consider the basis of biblical authority, or the doctrine of inspiration; theories as to the method or methods of the inspiration of the sacred writers; biblical criticism, so far as it bears on the authority and authentication of inspired Scripture; and the theological interpretation of the Bible.

§ 2. The nature of the Bible is twofold. On the one hand, it is a library of exceedingly miscellaneous contents, exhibiting such characteristics of human literature as might be expected to appear in the times and under the circumstances and conditions of the origin of its various books. On the other hand, these diverse writings are made, one and all, to subserve a superhuman master-purpose which fuses them into

[1] See above, pp. 113, 114; and below, ch. vii. § 10.

[2] See above, ch. iv. § 9.

one Bible,[1] wherein they acquire and exhibit connections and meanings which the human factors in their production, and the apparent purposes of their writers, do not fully account for or exhaust.[2]

The truth is that the Bible is one in a sense more complete than can be asserted of any other collection of writings so various in literary type and human purport. Speaking broadly, all the Sacred Scriptures subserve, either directly or indirectly, the common purpose of recording and illustrating the divine education of Israel; the process of divine self-manifestation; and the completion of both in the mystery of the Incarnate-Word, and in the delivery to the Church of God of a faith which can never cease to be valid and sufficient for the spiritual welfare of mankind. Israel's education and progress in spiritual knowledge, in spite of many national back-slidings, exhibits unique and consistent meaning throughout, because determined and controlled by divine guidance. And the Sacred Scriptures not only constitute literary monuments of

[1] The word is derived through the Latin from the Greek plural τὰ βιβλία, the Books. Long use, however, has given the force of the singular to the English "Bible." See Hastings, *Dic. of the Bible*, *s. v.* "Bible," A. I.

[2] Sanday says, "But if we take a wider range, and look at the diversified products of this individual inspiration, and see how they combine together, so as to be no longer detached units but articulated members in a connected and coherent scheme, we must needs feel that there is something more than the individual minds at work; they are subsumed, as it were, in the operation of a larger Mind . . . We are no longer confined for our data to the consciousness of the individual writer." *Inspiration*, pp. 402–406. See below, ch. vii. § 15.

this progress, but are also inspired by the Holy Spirit. Such considerations account for the marvellous unity of the Bible.

The uniqueness of the Bible is caused primarily by its inspiration.[1] Modern criticism, while it has increased our knowledge of the human origins and characteristics of the several Scriptures, has complicated men's notions of biblical inspiration; and great care is needed to distinguish between catholic doctrine on the subject and theories which, whatever may be their scientific value, are not of any dogmatic authority.[2] For the sake of clearness the catholic doctrine may be stated in relation to (*a*) the sacred writers; (*b*) the immediate message with which they were charged to their contemporaries; (*c*) and the resulting Canon of Holy Scripture. We adopt this method of statement when we affirm that the term "inspiration" has stood historically in the Catholic Church for the following distinct truths, all of which have ecumenical consent.[3]

(*a*) The human writers who had to do with the

[1] As a corollary, in order to investigate successfully the methods of inspiration of the sacred writers, we should consider primarily those peculiarities of the Scriptures that differentiate them from other literatures of the same age; for it is in what is distinctive that the phenomena of inspiration are observable.

[2] As we trust will become clear in these chapters, the catholic doctrine of inspiration cannot be modified in the slightest degree by the results of biblical criticism, which bear only on theories of the method of inspiration of the sacred writers.

[3] The best comprehensive treatise of the traditional type on biblical inspiration is, perhaps, Wm. Lee's *Inspiration of Holy Scripture*. Wordsworth, *On the Inspiration of the Bible* is also helpful,

production of the Bible were moved and assisted in various manners and degrees [1] by the Holy Spirit.[2]

(*b*) Their writings contain messages from God, addressed to the chosen race, and suited in content and purport to the several times of their delivery, and usually to the circumstances of the moment. These messages had divine authority. The Holy Ghost "spake by the prophets." [3]

but *ad populum*. Burgon's *Inspiration and Interpretation* is the work of an alarmist, but contains important matter. None of the above do justice to the questions raised by modern criticism. Those who do are often insecure in their hold upon catholic doctrine. Westcott's *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels*, pp. 31–53, is important. Richey's *What is the Bible;* and Elmendorf's *The Word and the Book;* are both calculated to reassure, and are both for ordinary readers. The first essay in *The Inspiration of Holy Scripture and Six Other Essays*, edited by Percival, is a defence of catholic doctrine by Fr. Longridge, S.S.J.E. In the same interest, but limited in scope, are Liddon's Sermons on *The Worth of the Old Testament*; and *The Inspiration of Selection*. Among the best books that exhibit the modern critical temper may be mentioned Sanday's *Oracles of God* (popular); and Bampton Lecs. on *Inspiration;* Robinson's *Some Thoughts on Inspiration;* and Watson's *Inspiration*. Wm. Barry's *Tradition of Scripture* is a useful Roman Catholic work; and Dods' *The Bible* is a very suggestive and modern protestant treatise.

Patristic catenas and citations are given in Lee's *Inspiration*, pp. 77–93, and App. G.; Westcott's *Introduction*, App. B.; and Longridge's Essay above mentioned.

[1] "God, who in many portions and in many manners spake of old unto the fathers in the prophets, in these last days spake unto us in His Son." Heb. i. 1, 2 (the Greek).

[2] 2 St. Pet. i. 21; 1 Cor. ii. 13. Cf. Exod. ii. 10–12; Job xxxii. 8; Isa. vi. 8, 9; Jerem. i. 4–9; Ezek. ii. 1–7; Amos vii. 14–16.

[3] Nicene Creed. The English "by" does not convey the full meaning of the Greek original (διά), which permits us to believe, and indeed implies, that the personal equation of the prophets was en-

(*c*) The resulting Canon or Bible, *qua* Bible, as authenticated by the Spirit-guided Church of God, has permanent, equal, and divine authority throughout: — that is, within the sphere of the divine purpose of inspiration in each several Scripture.[1] This divine purpose is limited, and, of course, is spiritual.[2] It is to be ascertained by devout study of Scripture itself, in the light of completed revelation.[3] But every part of Scripture, when rightly interpreted, in its sacred and canonical context, bears somehow, even if indirectly, upon divine purposes and teachings. In short, every part of Scripture has a divine purport; and, in that purport, is inerrant.[4]

The importance of distinguishing between the inspiration of the sacred writers and that of the Bible,

listed in the message. See Heb. i. 1: "God, who . . . spake of old unto the fathers in (ἐν) the prophets." Cf. St. Luke i. 70; Exod. ii. 12; Deut. iv. 2; Isa. vi. 8; Jerem. i. 7, 9; Ezek. ii. 4, 7; Amos ii. 15, 16. Note the many instances in which the prophets profess to have received and to deliver "the word of the Lord."

[1] 2 Tim. iii. 15–17; 2 St. Pet. i. 19, 21. Cf. St. John v. 39; Acts xvii. 11.

[2] "The Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Every Scripture . . . is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete," etc., 2 Tim. iii. 15–17. "In them ye think ye have eternal life," St. John v. 39. Cf. Rom. xv. 4; 1 Cor. x. 11.

[3] "Which are able to make thee wise . . . *through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*" Cf. St. Luke xxiv. 25–27; Rom. xvi. 16.

[4] St. John xvii. 17: "Thy word is truth." Cf. x. 35: "And the Scripture cannot be broken." Prov. xxx. 5, 6: "Every word of God is pure . . . Add thou not unto His words, lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." Note the frequent expression, "that it might

qua Bible, will appear shortly, when we consider the subject of degrees of inspiration.

§ 3. The word inspiration, in its etymological sense of breathing into,[1] describes the action of the Holy Spirit upon the sacred writers. Our knowledge of the purposes, degrees, and methods of this inspiration is to be derived from a critical study of the Scriptures, and from a comparison of them with other literature. The Church has not defined in this direction, and our theories must be governed by the assured results of such study — not by *a priori* conceptions.[2] Modern biblical criticism, in spite of the rationalistic vagaries of some critics, has thrown much light on the subject.

When we speak of the sacred writers we mean all who had to do with producing the contents of the Bible in the form and context there found. That is, we include not only those who were inspired to compose literature, but those also who were moved to select existing matter, and to purge, incorporate, redact,

be fulfilled which was spoken": St. Matt. i. 22; viii. 17; xii. 17; xiii. 35; xxi. 4; xxvii. 35; espec. xxvi. 53–56: "But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" Cf. in general, Psa. xxxiii. 11; cxix. 160; Dan. x. 21; 2 St. Pet. i. 19.

[1] See Thayer, *Lexicon of New Test. Greek*, *s. v.* θεόπνευστος. Cf. Murray, *New Eng. Dic.*, *s. v.* "Inspiration."

[2] So conservative and careful a theologian as Darwell Stone says, *Outlines of Dogma*, p. 124, "No definite detailed theory about inspiration has been laid down by the Church in any councils, or expressly formulated by teachers who, when taken together, represent the mind of the Church." He rightly adds, "This absence of a definite and detailed theory has not hindered the existence among Christians of the most intense conviction that Holy Scripture is the Word of God."

and supplement, whether by way of gloss or otherwise. Whatever view we may adopt as to current critical theories, we may hardly deny that some of the biblical writers took over pre-existing documents;[1] that certain of the Scriptures underwent subsequent editing;[2] and that accretions of later date than the contexts with which they were incorporated are discoverable in, and constitute parts of, our Sacred Canon.[3] Scholars have detected traces of all this in our existing Bible; and, to a very limited extent, they can distinguish what was composed by the original writers of the canonical books, what was borrowed by them, and what was added by later hands.[4] It would be a grave error indeed to suppose that these borrowed and added parts should one and all be eliminated from the written Word;[5] and, therefore, it would seem that the Holy Spirit moved the ancients to select, modify, and supplement, as well as to engage in fresh composition. At all events, private judgment is not competent to reverse any judgment

[1] The narratives of the Book of Genesis were certainly not based exclusively on oral tradition, or on special revelations.

[2] That the Pentateuch has not come to us in its precise original form is acknowledged generally. Cf. Orr, *Problem of the Old Test.*, pp. 375–377.

[3] The account of Moses' death is acknowledged to be post-Mosaic by those who, like the writer, believe in the Mosaic source of the general contents of the Pentateuch. The last verses of St. Mark's Gospel are considered to be an addition, although very ancient.

[4] One reason for mistrusting the conclusions of certain modern critics of the Pentateuch has been the excessive exactness with which they have distributed its contents into distinct documentary sources.

[5] Our Lord certainly appears to authenticate the Old Testament in a form that includes such elements.

which may be given by the Church as to the literary content of the Word of God.[1]

The circumstances which occasioned the writing of the several Scriptures, and the immediate ends, human and divine, that they were designed to subserve, are exceedingly diverse. This needs no elaboration, for it is generally acknowledged, and is illustrated by the variety of types of literature produced — histories, allegories, legal codes, prophecies, apocalypses, dramas, lyrical poems, and so forth.[2]

What is more apt to be misunderstood and misapplied is the evidence, seemingly conclusive, that the sacred writers were not all inspired in the same degree. This evidence is primarily the unequal spiritual value, when considered separately and intrinsically, of the different portions of Scripture. Some books are obviously less charged with direct spiritual significance than others, and the inference is natural and inevitable that the assistance afforded to their writers was lower in degree and less illuminative in effect.[3] It is

[1] Its competency is shown rather in determining to some extent the human sources of what is contained in the Canon, the dates and historical circumstances of their origin, and the faithfulness of existing texts to the original.

[2] Thus conservative writers distinguish between what was inspired for the purpose of revelation and what was not inspired for that end. See Lee, *Inspiration*, pp. 40–45; Westcott, *Introd. to the Study of the Gospels*, pp. 34–36. St. Augustine distinguishes between what the sacred writers produced by historical diligence, and what they wrote as prophets. *De Civ. Dei*, xviii. 38.

[3] It is not inconsistent with such inference that we should avoid the error of thinking that the illuminative value of the several parts

impossible to suppose, for instance, that the writers of the books of Judges and Esther were as fully inspired as was the writer of the Epistle to the Ephesians. Very few will question this contention.[1]

It is a grave mistake, however, to infer that the present authority of the several books of Scripture is unequal; that is, when considered with reference to their place in the Canon and the divine purposes which they are made to subserve in the written Word. This writer was moved, and assisted to the degree necessary, to write for one immediate purpose of God, and that writer for another purpose. And each resulting document in its permanent aspects has its own end to fulfil and its own divine purport in the completed Canon.

of Scripture to ourselves can be used as an accurate measure of the degrees with which their writers were inspired. We are not competent to judge safely in such matters, except in the most general and vague way.

[1] Differences in the degrees of inspiration do not alter, of course, the reality of a divine inspiration in each case. Sanday, *Inspiration*, pp. 42–47, shows that some of the ancients recognized these differences of degree. The subject was not adequately considered by them, however. He gives further remarks, pp. 257–259, on St. Paul's consciousness of an unequal inspiration in relation to different matters; and, in App. D., the patristic comments on 1 Cor. vii. 10, 12, 25, 40, wherein this consciousness appears. Cf. Watson, *Inspiration*, ch. xviii. Lee, *Inspiration*, pp. 34, 62, 403 et *seq.*, contends that the tendency of the theory that the inspiration of sacred writers differs in degrees "is to fine down to the minutest point, if not altogether to deny, the agency of the Holy Spirit in certain portions of the Bible." But, although such a tendency has shown itself, it arises from inadequate hold on catholic doctrine and from a rationalistic animus, not from acknowledgment of the facts, which are indisputable. As Lee points out, the Jewish doctors recognized different degrees of

Such differences of purpose, in view of the generally acknowledged law of parsimony in divine operations,[1] involved unequal degrees of divine assistance and different levels of direct edifying value in the result. But in each case the inspiration was divine, and the result as well — a literature rightly to be called the Word of God. Not all Scripture contains supernatural revelation, nor are the revelations there contained equally full or explicit; but every Scripture, in one way or another, subserves the progressive self-manifestation of God to His people.

So it is erroneous to measure the present authority of the several parts of the Bible by their edifying quality. To do so is to nullify the basis of biblical authority; which is not the amount of spiritual matter that its several parts contain, or the degree of inspiration enjoyed by their writers, but the fact that God has made the whole to be His Word. If we reckon the authority of a book of Scripture according to its edifying value for ourselves, we do not accept it because

inspiration for the three parts into which the Old Testament Canon was divided — the Law, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa. Cf. Ellicott, *Foundations of Sac. Study*, pp. 61, 62. A declaration on inspiration issued in 1894, with signatures of Dr. Bright of Oxford, Canon Carter, Canon Furse, W. H. Hutchings, P. G. Medd, W. C. E. Newbolt, F. W. Puller, B. W. Randolph, Darwell Stone, and other conservative theologians, says, "By inspiration is meant a special action of the Holy Ghost, varying in character and degree of intensity," etc.

[1] The law, that is, that God does not manifest Himself, or lay bare His power, needlessly, or uselessly. See Sanday, *Inspiration*, pp. 417–421.

authoritative, but on its merits, as determined by our own private judgment. The conclusion of the matter is that, when we assert that the inspiration of the sacred writers was unequal in degree, we should be careful not to mean, or seem to mean, that the existing Sacred Scriptures have unequal authority for the several purposes of their inspiration.[1]

If diversity appears in the occasions, immediate purposes and degrees of inspiration of the sacred writers, the same may be said as to the methods of inspiration. But we shall consider this subject later on, under the head of theories of inspiration.

§ 4. The term inspiration has a derivative significance as well as its primary or etymological one, and is used to describe the authoritative nature of the divine messages and literature which the sacred writers delivered and composed. This extended application of the term is too well established historically to be set aside on the plea of etymology.[2] The use of a word in literature must determine its meaning. It should be added that important theological consequences are likely to be involved in a refusal to apply the term

[1] It is because certain writers ignore the distinct use of the word inspiration, as applied to the Bible, *qua* Bible, that their broad and unqualified assertion of degrees in biblical inspiration seems to have such meaning. In certain instances it obviously does.

[2] In 2 Tim. iii. 16, the one instance in which the word θεόπνευστος occurs in the Bible, the term is found in the derivative sense. By no legitimate exegesis can the phrase πᾶσα γραφὴ θεόπνευστος be interpreted so as to avoid the conclusion that St. Paul is describing the Scriptures themselves to be inspired of God.

"inspired" to the messages of the prophets and to biblical writings, as distinguished from their human authors. These consequences pertain to the divine authority of existing biblical literature.[1] At all events, when the *productions* of the sacred writers are said to be inspired, the meaning is that they have divine authority; and this is the case, whether we speak of the immediate messages of the writers to those whom they addressed, or of the Sacred Canon in its permanent aspects. The two should be distinguished.

Speaking of the immediate messages first, the doctrine is to be maintained that the teaching which the prophets and apostles uttered and wrote in God's name came from God, and constituted "the Word of the Lord" to those who were addressed. Such messages were not, in their immediate bearing, necessarily pertinent to other times and circumstances than those of the moment, or to other people than those who were ostensibly addressed;[2] but, for the time and for their re-

[1] The late Bishop Ellicott cannot be regarded as one who would fall short in accepting the divine authority of the Scriptures. Yet his assertion that inspiration inheres in the writer, not the writing, leads him to define inspiration in a way that involves logically a denial of divine authority to such parts of Scripture as do not record divine revelations. He defines inspiration as "the direct equipment by the inflowing of the Holy Spirit for adequately expressing in human language the truths revealed by Almighty God to the spirit of the recipient." *Foundations of Sac. Study*, pp. 58–60.

[2] We maintain elsewhere, cf. ch. vii. § 15, that divine inspiration also imparted a larger and more permanent bearing to Old Testament prophecy —one that could not become apparent until the publication of the Gospel.

cipients, their authority was divine—they were divinely inspired.[1]

Speaking formally, however, much of Scripture was written for ends that did not warrant such an introductory phrase as "Thus saith the Lord." The sacred writers were moved to produce historical narratives, for example, as well as to convey direct divine communications. In this fact, perhaps, we shall find the basis of the contention that the Bible *contains* rather than *is* the Word of God.[2] The fact that not every part of Scripture is, in form, a message from God is certain. But we may not infer that divine authority is lacking to any part of the Bible; which should be acknowledged to be the Word of God in all its parts, and for all time. This is true in spite of the fact that its several portions differ widely in the purposes of their inspiration, and in the manners in which they embody and illustrate the divine mind and teaching.

[1] Sanday's *Inspiration*, pp. 144–155, is excellent on this subject. A notable New Testament illustration is found in Acts xv. 28, 29. "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us," etc. And this passage illustrates our contention that the divine messages in Scripture do not invariably, in their immediate meaning, apply to other times and circumstances than those of the moment. The rules laid down in that message have, in part, ceased to have binding force.

[2] Lee, *Inspiration*, App. C., p. 401, maintains that this contention can be traced to Judaic sources through Le Clerc and Grotius. Ellicott, *Foundations of Sac. Study*, p. 67, shows that the phrase "is the Word of God" teaches the union between the divine and human in the Scriptures, whereas the phrase "contains the Word of God" teaches their distinctness.

§ 5. And this constitutes another derivative use of the word "inspiration"; which signifies the permanent divine authority of the Bible, *qua* Bible, in all its parts, and irrespectively of human authorships and immediate purposes and degrees of inspiration of the sacred writers. All the Sacred Scriptures alike have God for their Author, as well as man, and are truly and properly to be called the Word of God.[1]

It should be added that this doctrine is most commonly meant by ecclesiastical writers when they speak

[1] In the fourth of the vows in *The Ordering of Priests*, the Scriptures are alluded to as "God's Word." American candidates have to sign a declaration, when ordained to any grade in the ministry, the opening clause of which reads, "I do believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God": *Constitution*, Art. VIII., *Digest* of 1904.

The Council of Trent, Sess. IV., says, the Synod "receives and venerates with equal affection of piety, and reverence, all the books both of the Old and of the New Testament, — seeing that one God is the Author of both," etc. The Vatican Council, Sess. III. cap. i., says that the Church holds these books to be holy and canonical, "not because having been compiled by human industry alone they were afterwards approved by her authority, nor merely because they contain revelation without error; but because, being written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, they have God as their Author and have been delivered as such to the Church herself."

Turning to the East, the Synod of Bethlehem (or Jerusalem), A.D. 1672, adopted as its own *The Confession of Dositheus*, the second decree of which says, "We believe the Divine and Sacred Scriptures to be God-taught." Robertson, *Acts and Decrees of the Synod of Jerusalem*, p. 112.

Darwell Stone, *Outlines of Dogma*, note 38, gives references to the same effect from the so-called Fourth Council of Carthage; Second Council of Lyons; St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, I. i. 10, etc. Patristic citations are given in Lee, *Inspiration*, App. G.

of biblical inspiration,[1] and has for us the most direct and central importance of the three truths connoted by the word inspiration. The inspiration of the sacred writers is indeed a truth of vital importance to theology, as is also the divine authority of prophetic teaching in its immediate purpose; but, unless the Bible which is in our hands is the Word of God, its authority in the proper sense of that term is reduced to a purely historical and academic level. That is, our dependence upon Scripture as an authoritative source of spiritual knowledge will be conditioned by the results of historical and critical scholarship touching facts and messages of a remote past.[2] The supreme question for those who depend upon Holy Scripture is this: "Are we warranted in believing that Holy Scripture, in the substantial form now authenticated to us by the Church, and independently of the uncertainties of historical and critical scholarship, is to be received as the veritable Word of God?" The catholic doctrine which we are setting forth answers, "Yes."

[1] We do not mean that they are in the habit of distinguishing formally between the inspiration of the writers and that of the Scriptures as such; but that the existing Scriptures, and their divine authority, are primarily in mind.

[2] The Bible contains, indeed, a world of matter that commands the assent of spiritually minded men irrespectively of its source. But to recognize the intrinsic merits and truth of literature, while it may fortify our belief in its divine authority, does not alone constitute, or afford sufficient basis for, such belief. Other literature secures our approval and acceptance on its merits; but we accept no literature as having been given us by divine authority, except the Canonical Scriptures.

This doctrine includes or involves the following propositions:

(*a*) When Holy Scripture is said to be inspired, "In the name of the Holy Scripture we do understand those canonical Books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church." The language quoted is historically inaccurate. But the principle implied is that we accept what has been acknowledged by the Church to be canonical Scripture.[1]

(*b*) In saying that the Scriptures have God for their Author, we do not exclude human authorship or human peculiarities of literary style and method. The human factor ought to be acknowledged in the production of each and every part of Scripture; and the facts require us to confess that the sacred writers were not made universally infallible by this inspiration, but were permitted to embody many traces in Scripture of their limitations in knowledge.[2] These limitations do not

[1] *Arts of Religion*, VI. On the authentication of Scripture, see the next section of this chapter.

[2] The human element of Scripture is discussed in relation to biblical criticism below, ch. vii. §§ 3–7. It is discussed at large in a multitude of modern treatises. For example, on traditional lines, in Lee, *Inspiration*, pp. 32, 33, 35–38, 139–144; Garbett, *God's Word Written*, ch. viii.–x.; and Wordsworth, *Inspiration*, pp. 5–8; in a more modern spirit, and carefully, in Westcott, *Introd. to the Study of the Gospels*, pp. 33–42; Kirkpatrick, *Divine Library*, pp. 90–93; and Watson, *Inspiration*, chh. xiv., xv.

The union of divine and human elements in Scripture is often likened to the union of two natures in our Lord. But the analogy has an important limitation. There is no hypostatic union involved in biblical inspiration. In the utterances of Christ the ideas and

interfere, however, with the inerrant authority of the Scriptures in their divine purport.[1]

(*c*) The inspiration of Scripture is full and absolute; which means simply that its authority is truly and properly divine, although derivative. This implies that it possesses a divine meaning, as distinguished from certain human conceptions embodied therein; and that this divine meaning and teaching cannot be rejected consistently by those who acknowledge the omniscience and truthfulness of God.

(*d*) Biblical inspiration is also plenary, in that it is to be acknowledged in relation to every part of Scripture. No portion of Scripture is lacking in divine authority within the range and purpose of its inspiration. Every part of Scripture is the Word of God, as well as the word of man. But the assertion that biblical inspiration is plenary leaves the question of method, whether by dictation or otherwise, entirely

convictions that are expressed, whether divine or human, are one and all the ideas and convictions of a divine Person. This does not hold with all that gains expression in the Scriptures. What does hold is this: that the Scriptures throughout are both divine and human, and in such wise that we may neither separate the two elements nor disregard their distinct integrity in any part of the Bible.

[1] Dr. Marcus Dods cannot be suspected of lack of the modern and critical temper, and he devotes a chapter to maintaining the thesis that, for its divine purpose, the Bible is infallible. See *The Bible*, ch. v. We are not saved the labour of ascertaining the divine purpose in Scripture, in order to master its divine teaching; and this agrees with the law elsewhere laid down, that God does not will to relieve us from painstaking in the acquisition of spiritual knowledge. Cf. ch. iii. § 15 (*e*), above.

open. The verbal theory, as usually defined, is not involved.[1]

(*e*) All the Scriptures are inspired for one supreme purpose, which is the cause of their remarkable unity. This purpose is to exhibit in its progressive revelation and fulfilment God's plan of self-manifestation and human redemption, culminating in the revelation of Jesus Christ and the establishment of His kingdom.[2]

(*f*) Each several part of Scripture is inspired to subserve, in its own manner, this master purpose. Accordingly, each part has a distinct immediate purpose which determines its divine purport, and the authoritative use and meaning which it is designed of God to have. But the doctrine of biblical inspiration does not guarantee the truth of what is found in a Scripture that is interpreted without reference to the particular purpose of its inspiration, or in isolation from the rest of the Scriptures.

(*g*) Biblical inspiration is unique in this, that its divine purpose, and the authority which it signifies, is not discoverable in any other literature. It is futile to deny that non-biblical writers have enjoyed supernatural assistance in various degrees, and have thus

[1] See below, § 10. The phrase "verbal inspiration" is ambiguous. It may mean merely that the Bible is inspired, *qua* Bible, throughout, which includes, of course, its words but implies nothing as to *how* they are inspired. It may also be intended to signify the so-called verbal theory, that the choice of words employed was exclusively divine.

[2] See above, § 2, *init.*

been enabled to produce books that are spiritually edifying. But these books are to be accepted solely on their merits, for they have not been given the authority of the Word of God written.[1]

§ 6. The primary and formal basis of our acceptance of the Scriptures as the Word of God is their authentication[2] as such by the Catholic Church. The Church's judgment is founded in reasons and warranted by evidences that are availiable for our consideration;[3] but it has an authority and finality that is not possessed by private judgment, however well informed. It expresses the consent of the generality of those who are spiritually competent to weigh the evidence, and is guided by the same Spirit who inspired the sacred writers. At all events, the fact is certain that the historical cause of the assurance which Christian men have as to the divine

[1] Cf. § 12, below.

[2] H. J. White, Hastings' *Dic. of the Bible*, *s. v.* "Vulgate," p. 880, says in regard to the use of the term authentic by the Council of Trent, "The word 'authentica' seems to have been used and understood not only in the sense of *official*, but also in the sense of *accurate* — at any rate to the extent that there were no mistakes in it which might lead to false doctrine in faith and morals . . . No verbal inspiration or infallible accuracy was claimed for it. Scholars might read their Bibles in the original tongues if they wished; but for ordinary use it was advisable to have one standard edition ('authenticam hac mente ut cujus fas sit eam legere sine periculo') instead of a number of independent and unauthorized translations." In brief, to authenticate Holy Scripture means to certify that the sacred books contained in the Bible are the Word of God, and that the texts or versions recognized by such authentication can be used safely as preserving the Word of God with substantial faithfulness.

[3] They are summarized in § 8, below.

authority of Holy Scripture, and as to what is Holy Scripture and what is not, is the witness of the Church universal. Furthermore, no judgment except that of the Church is of sufficient weight and authority to bind the consciences of the faithful in general to an acceptance of the divine authority of the Scriptures. It is a part of the Church's teaching function thus to authenticate the Scriptures, that is, to declare what is to be received as the Word of God.[1]

Her method has been to recognize certain existing books as making up a Sacred Canon, and to provide that these books shall be read in her public services as the Word of God. It has not been practicable or necessary that she should determine their human authorships, or even their precise original texts.

Yet the office of authenticating Scripture carries with it an authority to determine what texts and versions may be regarded as the authentic Word of God. In fact, however, the Church has never in her ecumenical capacity, whether collectively or diffusively, given formal and exclusive authentication to any particular

[1] *The Articles of Religion* describe the Church as "a witness and a keeper of Holy Writ," Art. xx. It should be noted that the Church's authentication does not *make* Scripture to be the Word of God, as Haneberg, a Roman Catholic writer, maintained prior to the Vatican Council, but simply bears witness that it has God for its Author. St. Augustine says, "I would not give credit to the Gospel, except the authority of the Catholic Church moved me thereto." *Contra Epis. Manichaei*, cap. v. Cf. Lacey, *Elem. of Doctrine*, pp. 23–26; Hooker, *Eccles. Polity*, III. viii. 13, 14; Sanday, *Inspiration*, pp. 51–58; Watson, *Inspiration*, ch. xvi.; Wilhelm and Scannell, *Manual*, Vol. I. pp. 62–65; Tanquerey, *De Fontibus Theol.*, §§ 41–49.

texts or versions.[1] She has evidently not deemed such action necessary. In the first place, she has not regarded textual variations as necessarily destructive of authenticity;[2] although it is clearly in accordance with her mind that her critical scholars should seek to restore the original of every corrupted text as accurately as possible. Again, the substantial agreement of such texts and versions as have gained wide use in the Church is sufficiently close, in spite of multitudinous superficial variations, to render formal judgment as to which is to be preferred quite unnecessary.[3]

[1] The "textus receptus," so called, of the New Testament has no ecclesiastical authorization, but was put out by the Elzevir press in 1633 and was adopted by European scholars. It differs but little from the 3d edition of Stephanus, A.D. 1550, which was regarded as standard by English scholars. Both have become antiquated with the progress of textual criticism. See Scrivener's *Introduction*, edited by Miller, Vol. II., pp. 193–195; Jülicher, *Introd. to the New Test.*, § 53; Kenyon, *Handbook to the Textual Criticism of the New Test.*, pp. 231, 232. The so-called "authorized" version was never really authorized by the English Church, although a certain edition of it — published by Eyre and Strahan in 1812 — was made the "Standard" by the American Church in 1823 (see *Journal of Gen. Conv.* of 1898, pp. 301–305, for a full account by Dr. Gold), which also authorized an edition containing alternative marginal readings in 1901 (*Journal* of 1901, p. 100, and App. XII.). The Roman Council of Trent authenticated the Latin Vulgate (Sess. IV.); and the official edition now in use was issued in 1592 A.D. by the authority of Clement VIII. A kind of authentication is implied in the use of passages of Scripture in ecclesiastical Service Books, but there are no ecumenical Service Books. No text or version exists which has ecumenical authority, and no action has been taken by the Church which hampers textual criticism.

[2] That is, of divine authority by virtue of substantial preservation of the Word of God written.

[3] On textual criticism, see below, ch. vii. § 3.

But the passive attitude of the Church does not constitute an abdication of her authority in controversy touching textual authenticity of the Word of God. This needs to be insisted on. Valuable and necessary as the work of textual critics certainly is, the authenticity which the Church determines is dependent upon wider considerations than those with which textual criticism is concerned. This authenticity is based upon a preservation of the substantial teaching of Scripture, even more than upon verbal faithfulness to the original text, important as such faithfulness is. Critics claim no infallibility, and the best critical texts not only retain previously existing textual corruptions, but may also, by reason of erroneous conjectural emendations, contain new variations from the original. Consequently, it is quite possible that a critical text, the superiority of which is undoubted, so far as the generality of its readings is concerned, may nevertheless contain errors of substantial importance, and subversive of the divine teaching of the Scriptures. This is why it would be dangerous for the Church to surrender her right to pass judgment, if necessary, on the texts and versions, whether critical or otherwise, that come into use among the faithful.

§ 7. The question as to what books of Scripture have received ecumenical authentication requires brief consideration.[1] No Ecumenical Council has taken

[1] For the history of the Canon see Hastings, *Dic. of the Bible*, *s. vv.* "Canon," by V. H. Stanton; "Old Test. Canon," by F. H. Woods; "New Test. Canon," by V. H. Stanton; Westcott, *Canon of*

direct action on the subject; but the Council of Chalcedon is understood to have ratified the Canons of the Council of Laodicea,[1] and thus indirectly to have authenticated all our present Canon, with the exception of the Apocalypse and the deutero-canonical books except Baruch. The Quinisext Council of Constantinople, 692 A.D., ratified not only the Canons of Laodicea, but also those of Carthage, 419 A.D., and other documents containing lists of canonical books. This action was ratified by the seventh Ecumenical Council.[2]

The lists thus sanctioned agree in including all of our Canon except the deutero-canonical books, Esther and the Apocalypse. Esther is included in every list except those of Gregory Nazianzen and Amphilochius. The Apocalypse is included in the lists of Athanasius

the New Testament; Gregory, *Canon and Text of the New Test.* Charteris, *Canonicity*, gives valuable patristic evidence on the early reception of canonical books.

[1] Canon I. of Chalcedon ratifies the Canons of the Synods of the holy fathers. Hefele, in his *Hist. of the Councils*, says that this action refers to an existing collection of Canons, part of which had been enacted by Provincial Councils. The Council of Chalcedon gave them ecumenical authority. See Bright, *Notes on the Canons of the first Four General Councils*, pp. 123–126; Percival, *Ecum. Councils*, pp. 267, 268.

[2] Quinisext, Canon II.; 2d Nicea, Can. I. See Percival, pp. 361, 362, 555, 556. The Canons of Laodicea, Carthage, and the Quinisext referred to are given in their originals by Sanday, *Inspiration*, pp. 59–61. These and the other lists sanctioned are given in their several places in English by Percival. The other lists include those of SS. Athanasius, Gregory Naz., and Amphilochius, and the so called Apostolic Canons. See also Sanday, *op. cit.*, pp. 6, 7.

and of the Council of Carthage. The deutero-canonical books are included generally in the list of Gregory Nazianzen, and partly in the other lists, excepting that of Amphilochius which excludes them all. Such is the nature of the indirect ecumenical action of the Church. The Council of Trent adopted a list which includes a majority of our deutero-canonical books;[1] but this does not hinder Roman Catholic writers from giving them a lower rank than the proto-canonical books.[2] The sixth Article of Religion mentions the deutero-canonical books, but not in the list of books "of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church"; and denies their use by the Church "to establish any doctrine."

The conclusion of the matter, confirmed by a study of the growth of the Canon in patristic acceptance, is that, although historically inaccurate in saying there "was never any doubt in the Church," the sixth Article is sound in its teaching. The proto-canonical books, as they are contained in the English version of King James, gained a semi-formal acceptance in the ecumenical sphere by the concurrent action of ancient Synods. Their authority is therefore beyond dispute among those who acknowledge the authority of the Church. The deutero-canonical books are reckoned generally as a part of Holy Scripture; but not with the same freedom from doubt, nor with uni-

[1] Sess. IV. Cf. Gibson, *Thirty-Nine Arts.*, Vol. I. p. 233.

[2] Cf. Schouppe, *Elem. Theol. Dog.*, Tract IV., §§ 56–61; Hunter, *Outlines of Dog. Theol.*, pp. 204, 205.

versal dependence upon them for proof of ecclesiastical doctrine.[1]

§ 8. The Church was led to authenticate the Scriptures by reasons which are available for our consideration, and which serve to confirm her judgment as to the divine authority of the canonical books. These books were not accepted all at once, or because of any special revelation, although the Church was undoubtedly guided by the Holy Spirit in her final judgment. In the case of some of the New Testament books, the process of arriving at a final decision was more or less protracted.

We proceed to summarize the reasons that appear to have determined the Church's judgment, and the material evidences which confirm the catholic doctrine that the Scriptures which the Church has authenticated are what she declares them to be, the Word of God.[2]

(*a*) The Old Testament Canon, as formed by the Jewish Church, was understood to have received the sanction of Christ, and was authenticated by the Church on that ground. Perhaps an immediate reason that determined the contents of the Canon for the Jews

[1] See Sanday, *Inspiration*, pp. 91–96; Hastings, *Dic. of the Bible*, *s. v.* "Apocrypha"; Gibson, *Thirty-Nine Arts.*, vi., pp. 274–279; Pusey, *Eirenicon*, Vol. II. pp. 122 *et seq.*

[2] On the grounds of the Church's authentication of Scripture, and the arguments which confirm her judgment as to their divine inspiration, see Watson, *Inspiration*, chh. vi.–xiii.; Laud, *Conference with Fisher*, xvi. pp. 71 et *seq.* (Ang. Cath. Lib.); Jackson, *Works*, Bk. I. ch. iii. Vol. I. pp. 23–25; Field, *The Church;* Westcott, *Introd. to the Study of the Gospels*, pp. 43–53; Sanday, *Inspiration*, pp. 55–58, 105–115, 147–155; Lee, *Inspiration*, Lec. VI.

was their suitableness for public reading in the synagogues. The Church's acceptance of the Old Testament books constituted a precedent; and the incompleteness and inadequacy of the Old Testament, viewed from the standpoint of the revelation of Jesus Christ, demanded the incorporation of later writings into the Canon.

(*b*) The apostolic authorship of certain existing documents caused them to be considered first; for the apostles were believed to have taught with a special divine inspiration, and to have shown an unmistakable consciousness of writing with the authority of the Holy Spirit.[1] A similar consideration undoubtedly determined the previous Jewish acceptance of the prophetic writings of the Old Testament.[2] At all events, the authorships, and apparent claims to inspiration, of many of the books of Scripture challenge a consideration of their authenticity as the Word of God, and pre-dispose believers to its acknowledgment.

(*c*) The transcendent spiritual quality of the bulk, at least, of biblical literature convinced the Church of its supernatural inspiration, and served as a criterion by which to differentiate its books from uninspired literature. This appears in the doubts which were felt touching some of the Old Testament books, and in the absolute rejection of the apocryphal Gospels. It is also seen in the immense superiority of the early narratives of the Old Testament over the corresponding

[1] See Sanday, *Inspiration*, pp. 145–149. Cf. 1 Cor. ii. 13.

[2] See Isa. vi. 8, 9; Jerem. i. 4–9; Ezek. ii. 1–7; Amos vii. 14–16.

traditional and mythical documents of ancient gentilic races.[1]

(*d*) Convinced as the Church was that her own traditional faith had been divinely revealed, she necessarily scrutinized the teaching of the books which she accepted, and was influenced in her determination by their conformity to this faith. Recognizing, however, that divine revelation had been progressive, she did not consider the relative defectiveness of Old Testament teaching to be a reason for rejecting its books. But the fact that the Old Testament Scriptures pointed unmistakably to the fuller revelation of Jesus Christ was regarded as confirmatory of their divine inspiration.

(*e*) The Scriptures were seen to be at one with each other, and to be dominated in their fundamental significance by a master purpose which distinguished the collection as a whole from all merely human productions. This fact confirmed the belief in their inspiration as a whole; and also determined the authenticity of each book. No book could be authenticated which failed to harmonize with the rest of Scripture and could not find an organic place therein.

(*f*) The sobriety and truthful quality of the Scriptures, as seen, for instance, in their narrative portions, and as contrasted with the defective sincerity, vanity, and exaggeration exhibited in other ancient writings, undoubtedly had their influence. The sacred writers take no pains to conceal their own shortcomings or those of the heroes of their race; and there is no trace

[1] See Kirkpatrick, *Divine Library*, pp. 97–99.

of effort to embellish or to astonish the reader with wonders or other sensational material. The writers are free to a unique degree from objectionable self-consciousness.

(*g*) The abiding and catholic value of the sacred books, which was increasingly realized as each new generation of Christians studied them, and their permanent suitableness for public reading in the Church's services, had a large part in determining the result. Some of the apostolic writings have not been preserved;[1] and the reason for this may be that their value and utility was momentary only. No doubt they contained sound and authoritative teaching, and served a divine purpose, but they were not necessarily suited for other conditions than those which caused them to be written. The Holy Spirit did not enable the Church to preserve and authenticate them.

(*h*) As time went by an increasingly wide consensus of those who were competent to arrive at just conclusions touching the claims of the canonical books tended to crystallize and precipitate expressions of the Church's judgment. It should not be forgotten that the Church's mind is not only guided supernaturally, but is also the fruit of the meditations and studies of her saints and doctors.[2]

This consensus has continued, since the completion of the Church's Canon, to confirm the correctness of its ecclesiastical authentication. The Spirit has borne

[1] See Lightfoot, *Epistle to the Philippians*, pp. 138–140.
[2] See Sanday, *Inspiration*, pp. 7–10.

witness all along in the hearts and minds of countless believers, who have unceasingly marvelled at the transcendent glory, truthfulness and value of the Sacred Scriptures for all sorts and conditions of men, and for every age and race.[1]

II. *Theories of Inspiration*

§ 9. The advantage to biblical students of acquiring as intelligent views as possible of the methods of the Holy Spirit in inspiring the sacred writers should be very apparent;[2] although it is not vital that the faithful in general should understand these methods, provided they accept the Scriptures themselves as the Word of God.

The Church does not define the methods of inspiration, but leaves her scholars free to ascertain what they can in this direction by a critical examination of the Scriptures themselves. Such study has caused the adoption of various theories; and we are free to adopt any theory that appears to be required by the facts and

[1] The protestant errs in making such witness of the Spirit in individual believers to be the primary ground of acceptance of the Scriptures, for individuals may easily mistake their own unassisted judgment for the witness of the Spirit. But that the Spirit does in some measure assist individual believers to discern the divine source of Scripture is certain.

[2] Theories of inspiration are discussed by Lee, *Inspiration*, pp. 32–39; and App. C.; Hastings, *Dic. of the Bible*, *s. v.* "Bible," pp. 296–299; Sanday, *Inspiration*, pp. 28–47 and Lec. VIII.; Stanton, *Place of Authority*, pp. 80–89; Schouppe, *Elem. Theol. Dog.*, Tract IV., §§ 28–55; Tanquerey, *De Fontibus Theol.*, § 51; Dods, *The Bible*. Lec. IV.; Westcott, *Introd. to the Study of the Gospels*, App. B; Darwell Stone, *Outlines of Dogma*, pp. 124–130.

is consistent with the truth that the existing Sacred Scriptures have divine authority.

§ 10. (*a*) The *verbal theory* has been widely held; and has often been thought to be essential to a belief in the plenary inspiration of the Bible. This is not the case. Plenary inspiration means the divine authority of the whole Bible. We can accept this, and the Church teaches it, without being committed to any view touching the method of God in inspiring the sacred writers. The verbal theory concerns that method, and describes it as determining word by word the language chosen by the sacred writers, so that, in effect, every word was dictated by the Holy Spirit. The writers were mere secretaries, or, as certain ancient fathers put it, harps or lyres, the music of which was determined by the Holy Spirit.[1] Those who hold such a view are

[1] See on this theory, Sanday, *Inspiration*, pp. 34–36, 260–269; Dods, *The Bible*, pp. 107–118. Hooker says, *Serm.* V. § 4, that the language of the prophets was "uttered syllable by syllable as the spirit put it into their mouths; no otherwise than the harp or the lute doth give a sound according to the discretion of his hands that holdeth and striketh it with skill." The figure of a musical instrument, played upon by the Spirit, is found in patristic writings. Westcott says, always with a suspicion of heresy in their use: *Introd. to the Study of the Gospels*, App. B, § ii. 4. The view was popular among post-reformation writers, especially the Calvinists, but is rarely urged now except in modified forms. Connected with such a view is St. Augustine's belief that Hebrew was the original language, which was allowed to be preserved by the chosen race because it did not participate in the guilt of Babel: *De Civ. Dei*, xvi. 11; xviii. 39. Another and related view, frequently found in ancient literature, was that prophecy involved an abnormal condition in the prophet — trance, ecstasy, dreaming, and the like. See Sanday, *op. cit.*, pp. 129–133.

apt to insist that only the original text of each book has authority; and that, if it could be recovered, the writers would be found to have been inerrant in every subject to which they refer, including profane history and natural science. They are also disposed to treat all narratives that are not ostensibly allegorical as strictly historical, and as closing such questions as the order and method of creation, the antiquity of man, the extent of the deluge, etc.[1]

Dealing with these corollaries of the verbal theory first, we maintain that it is both unnecessary and perilous to base the authority of our Bible upon its agreement with the original text. To do so is to substitute *a priori* dogmatism for a patient study of the facts. These prove clearly enough that we are unable to recover the original text of many parts of Scripture; so that, unless we may accept the authority of the Church to determine that what we have is the Word of God, we have no divinely inspired Scripture. The only Word of God written which concerns us vitally

[1] The belief in this kind of inerrancy of Holy Scripture is not confined to defenders of the verbal theory, however, but is found in perhaps a majority of older writers who believed in plenary inspiration and touched upon the subject. But nothing like ecumenical authority can be claimed for it. St. Augustine says of the Canonical Books, "I most firmly believe that none of their authors ever fell into error in writing them; that if I meet with anything in those books which seems to me to be at variance with the truth, I do not doubt but that either my copy of that book is faulty, or that the translation of it which I am using has missed the sense, or that I myself have failed to understand the true meaning of the writer." *Epis. ad Hieron*, 82.

is that which is preserved in the texts and versions which we actually possess; and, as we have seen elsewhere, its authority is guaranteed to us by the Spirit-guided Church.

The same mistake of substituting *a priori* assumption for investigation of the phenomena of Scripture itself accounts for the contention that divine inspiration must have made the sacred writers inerrant in every respect, and that the narratives of the Bible, in their original text, should be taken as closing certain historical and scientific questions.[1]

The correctness of the verbal theory, as is the case with other theories, depends wholly upon its agreement with the phenomena of the Scriptures. It is true that we have not the precise original texts, but the alterations that these texts have undergone have not revolutionized their literary peculiarities, and we have abundant data with which to test the theory. The conclusion forced upon us is that it is inadequate, and does not agree with all the facts. There is sufficient evidence that some of the language of the Scriptures was, in effect at least, not chosen by man, but by God Himself. We need give but one example — the Decalogue. Many others might be given. But it is practically impossible to make the verbal theory agree with multitudinous traces of human and individual peculiarities of literary style and vocabulary that are found in every part of Scripture — peculiarities, for

[1] We treat more fully of the inerrancy of the sacred writers in ch. vii. §§ 5, 6.

instance, that enable us to establish a common authorship for the epistles of St. Paul, and to discover the probable dates and sources of many books and passages of the Scriptures. The human factors have left their traces everywhere, and these traces cannot be treated by reasonable scholars as wholly the result of divine dictation. In any case, it is certain that, if God chose the very words of the original texts of Scripture throughout, those originals have not been accurately preserved for our use.

It should be clear that this theory rests upon the *a priori* assumption that an inspired literature must reveal no traces of human imperfection. We have no right to insist upon such an assumption. The facts must determine our views, and they are fatal to the assumption in question. If it were true, we should be forced to conclude that our existing Bible, the only one available, is a somewhat mutilated and humanized production, more calculated to mislead on account of its lofty claim than to afford secure warrant for an accurate faith.

§ 11. (*b*) The second theory is that the inspiration of the sacred writers extends only to the doctrinal and moral *res et sententias*, or the spiritual subject-matter. The writers were either so illuminated positively, or so restrained negatively, that they fell into no error in their prophetic or doctrinal teaching. But they were left free in other respects.[1]

[1] Held by Paley, Döllinger, and many German writers. It is criticised by Dods, *The Bible*, pp. 121–123. Some Roman Catholic writers have adopted it: Newman, *Nineteenth Century*, Feb. 1884;

It must be acknowledged that if the writers were inspired at all, to that degree their spiritual teaching must have been determined and controlled by the Holy Spirit. Moreover, this theory permits us to do justice to the human factor, without hindering us from acknowledging that certain words and phrases may have been primarily of divine chòice, such as were necessarily bound up with true doctrine, and such as constituted some specific message from God.

But the theory cannot be applied to all the facts. Inspiration is not confined in its purpose to divine revelation. Many passages of Scripture contain no spiritual teaching from God whatever, but record events, ideals, and practices that are not invariably true or righteous. Such portions indeed subserve in various ways the general and edifying purpose for which the Scriptures are given to us, but only when taken in right relation to the rest of the Canon.[1] The immediate purpose for which their original writers were moved to produce them was not apparently doctrinal. In brief, the theory accords with some of the facts, but is wholly inadequate as a general theory of inspiration.

§ 12. (*c*) A third theory denies that the inspiration

Di Bartolo, *Critères Théologiques*, pp. 254 *et seq.* See Tanquerey, *De Fontibus Theol.*, § 51. The phrase *res et sententias* is conventional among the Latin writers.

[1] The Book of Judges illustrates this contention. The purpose of its divine preservation and sanction seems to be that we should be able to consider a certain stage in the long process of Israel's education by God — certainly not that we should accept all its teachings as perfect and final.

of the sacred writers differs *in kind* from that of many non-biblical writers, who, it is said, display a spiritual wisdom and insight which seems to be due to the same cause as is that which is exhibited in Holy Scripture.

Those who intend by such a contention to indicate the method of inspiration of the sacred writers mean, of course, that it was not supernatural in the usual sense of that term; but simply an unusual natural genius in religion, or the result of natural conditions and circumstances calculated to produce men of lofty spiritual insight.[1] Such a view is essentially rationalistic, and signifies an absolute rejection of the Christian doctrine of biblical inspiration and authority. It cannot be considered seriously by catholic believers.

But certain writers appear to mean by the contention in question simply that we need not consider supernatural inspiration to be *confined* to the writers of Holy Scripture. Just as many are wont to attribute to the assistance of the Spirit such graces as are displayed by those who are outside the covenant of promise, so, it may be urged, we are at liberty to account for the lofty spiritual quality of much non-biblical literature by recognizing its supernatural inspiration.[2]

[1] Held by Morell and F. W. Newman in England, and by Theodore Parker in America; also by unitarian and "liberal" writers generally. See A. H. Strong, *Doc. of God*, pp. 202–204; Lee, *Inspiration*, App. C. III. pp. 405–408. The view is maintained by Réville, in *Liberal Christianity*, pp. 28–32.

[2] So apparently Sanday, *Inspiration*, pp. 126–128; Gore, *Creed of the Christian*, p. 68. It is to be remembered in this connection that

This is not, properly speaking, a theory of the sacred writers' inspiration at all, since it does not undertake to define the method of such inspiration. Catholic writers whose orthodoxy is above suspicion have believed in the genuineness of mediæval and modern revelations.[1] The Alexandrian fathers believed that certain pagan philosophers were divinely guided.[2]

But none the less, to use the term inspiration in such connections, and to deny without qualification the uniqueness of biblical inspiration, is misleading, and apt to involve serious error in doctrine. No doubt it is permissible to think that the respective *manners* in which the Holy Spirit has assisted biblical writers on the one hand, and non-biblical writers on the other, do not differ in kind.[3] But His assistance to biblical writers was none the less *unique in purpose and result*, and this accounts for the restriction of the term inspiration in theological application to the Bible and its writers. Non-biblical writers were not inspired for

inspiration was claimed by the apostolic fathers: Clement Rom., *ad Cor.*, lix. 1; lxiii. 2; Ignatius, *ad Philad*, vii. 1. Sanday says, "They represent . . . survival or overflow of the consciousness which is so strong in the authors of the Canonical Books of both Testaments": *Inspiration*, p. 386. Cf. A. H. Strong's criticism, *Doc. of God*, pp. 204–208, on "the Illumination Theory," which exhibits a view that is very nearly equivalent to this.

[1] Cf. above, p. 64, note 2.

[2] Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, p. 58, note.

[3] The Church has not defined the manner in either case. The question is therefore an open one, provided our conclusions are consistent with her teaching as to the supernatural quality of biblical inspiration and the peculiar divine authority of Scripture.

authoritative ends, and their writings are to be accepted, if at all, on their merits only. They may not be treated as the Word of God. The same limitation attends private revelations, supposing them to be genuine. Some of them, for instance, have received papal approval. But this approval does not, even in the Roman Church, place them on a level with Scripture, or give them binding authority. It means only that their content is recognized to be consistent with the faith. In short they are approved on their merits simply.

The sum of the matter is that we ought to avoid a terminology which is novel and confusing, and which tends to obscure the unique purpose and result of the inspiration of the sacred writers, and the peculiar divine authority of the Scriptures.

§ 13. (*d*) Certain parts of Scripture show traces of an *inspiration of selection*.[1] It is widely acknowledged, for example, that the Book of Genesis contains documents that are more ancient than their biblical context.[2] No doubt this material was purged of pagan

[1] The late Canon Liddon employed this phrase in a university sermon entitled, *The Inspiration of Selection*. Cf. Watson, *Inspiration*, pp. 83–85; Sanday, *Inspiration*, pp. 420–423.

[2] Liddon says, in the sermon above referred to, "And thus we are led to notice a feature common both to the Old and New Testaments — the startling presence of what may at first sight appear to be foreign elements in the Sacred Book. The early history of Genesis may suggest traditions which belonged to ancient pagan peoples living in the great Mesopotamian plain; the original text of its early genealogies may lie buried . . . at Kirjath-Sepher, or elsewhere; . . . its later literature may betray affinities — however we explain them

ideas, and thus fitted for its sacred use.[1] If an existing document proved to be suitable to fill out biblical narratives, or in any other manner to subserve the purposes of biblical inspiration, it may have been incorporated into Scripture as it stood. If so, it was divine inspiration that suggested and warranted its incorporation. Neither the doctrine of inspiration nor the indications of Scripture itself require us to limit the divine impulse by which holy men of old were moved to original composition. Compilation, editing, and selecting may be included. In any case, the result of the literary work of these holy men, whether in composition or selection, received divine authority and constitutes the Word of God.

It should not be overlooked in this connection that the spiritual value and meaning of certain portions of Scripture may depend upon their being in the Canon,

— with Persian forms of thought . . . What they really show is that the inspiration which dictated its [the Jewish Religion's] worship and its sacred records was largely an inspiration of selection."

[1] Liddon says, "One work of the Holy Spirit is to collect these outlying and — may I say it? — less regular creations of the Divine Mind; it is to disinter the gems that lie hidden beneath the accumulated soil of ages; it is to bring to a focus the rays of light scattered throughout heathendom, and to exhibit their place in the true self-revelation of God. For if the Holy Spirit thus selects materials from imperfect or false systems, He does not thereby sanction these systems as a whole, or even imply that those portions of them which He does not employ are after the mind of God."

We may well add, in similar terms, If the Holy Spirit selects materials from pagan myths, He does not thereby sanction these myths as a whole or entitle us to reckon what is thus selected as retaining the nature and level of myth in its new and sacred context.

and thus related to a divinely inspired context. The Book of Ruth, when isolated from Scripture, might easily be reckoned as merely human history, whereas its place in the Bible gives it a significant bearing on the Incarnation.[1] Other illustrations might be given of the principle that, if any literature became part of the Word of God by its divine selection and consequent incorporation into the sacred Canon, rather than by supernatural prompting and assistance afforded to the original writer, such literature must have assumed a richer and divine significance, due to its new setting and place in the Sacred Scriptures.[2] This change of connection and deepening of meaning would make the incorporated matter truly and properly the Word of God.

§ 14. (*e*) The *dynamic theory* emphasizes and defines in modern terms the catholic doctrine that a superhuman factor has been involved in the production of Holy Scripture.[3] It is sometimes pressed in a sense that cannot be verified by a study of Scripture itself, and is not required by catholic teaching. This is the case when it is maintained that nothing is contained in Scripture which was not written *in its original*

[1] We do not mean to assert that the Book of Ruth was not inspired in its original production. We are simply indicating a tenable supposition, that its inspiration may be that of selection.

[2] This deepening of meaning bears on mystical interpretation, which is discussed in ch. vii. § 15.

[3] The dynamic theory is maintained by Westcott, *Introd. to the Study of the Gospels*, pp. 34–42; Lee, *Inspiration*, Lec. IV. (who says that it should be supplemented by distinguishing between revelation and inspiration); A. H. Strong, *Doc. of God*, pp. 211, 212, and numerous conservative writers.

form with special assistance. As we have seen, the sacred writers in some instances incorporated existing documents, of purely natural origin, apparently; and it is a tenable view that whole books derive their spiritual value and meaning from this incorporation, rather than from supernatural assistance in their original composition. But if we understand by the production of Scripture the selection of existing documents, as well as the writing of prophetic literature, we may not deny the truth which the dynamic theory formulates, that all the Scriptures owe their making, *in the form and connection in which they are given us*, to the moving, enabling, and guiding power of the Holy Spirit, as well as to the work of their human authors and editors.

The word "dynamic" differentiates catholic doctrine from the limited theories which we have considered. The Holy Spirit employed human agents, illuminating their minds so far as the end in view required, and enabling them to write, select, and edit in a manner suited to the immediate divine purpose in each case.[1] Thus the human agent wrote in his own

[1] St. Augustine writes, "The wisdom of God . . . insinuates itself into holy souls, and makes them the friends of God and His prophets, and noiselessly informs them of His works. They are taught also by the angels of God, who always behold the face of the Father, and announce His will to whom it befits." *De Civ. Dei*, XI. 4. Wordsworth describes inspiration as a transfiguration by which the writers were elevated above their uninspired level by the power of the Holy Spirit. *Inspiration*, pp. 5, 6. Tanquerey, *De Fontibus Theol.*, § 53, cites the encyclical of Leo XIII. (*Providentissimus*, Nov. 18, 1893), "*Nam supernaturali ipse virtute ita eos ad scribendum excitavit* et movit, ita scribentibus astitit, ut ea omnia eaque sola quæ

characteristic manner, but often with a spiritual force and pregnancy of meaning that made the result glorious forever, and which cannot be accounted for by his purely natural capacity. No unassisted writer, for instance, could have written certain chapters of the Book of Isaiah, or of the Epistle to the Ephesians.

This theory leaves open the question as to the degree of divine assistance in each case, and ought not to require us to discover unmistakable traces of supernatural assistance in every part of Scripture. It also leaves us free to accept unreservedly the catholic doctrine that the resulting Bible has divine and equal authority throughout; provided we avoid the error of grounding that authority in human authorships, or in the particular degrees of assistance afforded to the several sacred writers, or in the edifying value which we discover in the Scriptures considered separately; also provided we distinguish, so far as we can, the limited and spiritual ends for which each Scripture appears to be divinely inspired.

§ 15. The conclusion to which the facts seem to point is in accordance with what is said in the Epistle to the Hebrews,[1] with reference to the Old Testament prophets. The Holy Ghost spake in them not only "in many portions," but also "in many manners";

ipse juberet, et recte mente conciperent, et fideliter conscribere vellent, et apte infallibili veritate exprimerent: secus, non ipse esset auctor sacræ Scripturæ universæ." He proceeds to distinguish three requirements of inspiration: (*a*) *moving* of the will to write; (*b*) *illumination* of the writer's mind; (*c*) *assistance* in writing.

[1] Heb. i. 1.

— manners too various, and often too mysterious, to be formulated adequately in a general theory.[1]

At all events, two precious truths are entirely unaffected by theories as to the method of inspiration of the sacred writers: viz., plenary inspiration, or the divine authority, of the existing Sacred Scriptures in all their parts; and the inerrancy of the Bible in its inspired purport.

[1] Cf. Andrewes, *Works*, Vol. I. pp. 104, 105 (Ang.-Cath. Lib.); Gore, *Creed of the Christian*, pp. 70–73.

CHAPTER VII

CRITICISM AND INTERPRETATION

I. *Criticism*

§ 1. The right and value of scholarly criticism of Holy Scripture cannot reasonably be gainsaid. There are indeed some biblical critics whose rationalistic presuppositions vitiate their methods and reduce the weight of their conclusions. But no one who believes in the self-manifesting power of truth need fear the results of the searching scrutiny of the human elements and factors of the Scriptures which is now being carried on in many lands. Time and enlightened judgment are certain to discredit rationalistic theories, and the Church will in the end profit by the labours even of rationalistic critics, without being led astray by their vagaries. At all events, if the Sacred Scriptures cannot stand the test to which they are being put in our day, they are not what we believe them to be — the Word of God. We may, in such case, be thankful to have so serious an error corrected. But this belief is not an error, and its truth will grow more and more clear as criticism becomes more searching and true.

The previous chapter ought to have made it clear that the following presuppositions will govern our consideration of the subject before us:

(*a*) The Bible, as it is substantially contained in the versions which have gained wide use among orthodox Christians,[1] is the Word of God, having God for its principal Author, and possessing divine authority in all its parts.

(*b*) Holy Scripture, in its inspired purport, rightly understood, will be found to be infallible and inerrant in every case; and no part of Scripture is lacking in such purport, whatever human limitations it may also exhibit.

(*c*) The authentication of the Word of God pertains to the Spirit-guided Catholic Church, and is not to be confused with questions of human authorship.

(*d*) Whatever may have been the method of the Holy Spirit in inspiring the human authors and editors of the Scriptures, the process of producing the Bible was supernatural, in the proper sense of that term, and was absolutely unique in its purpose and result. That is, biblical inspiration alone has produced a literature having divine authority.

(*e*) The divine factor in the production of Scripture must have influenced to some extent the choice of language, and this should be allowed for in literary criticism.

(*f*) The human factor was not suppressed. The method of inspiration was not mechanical. Accord-

[1] These versions, as is well known, cannot be harmonized in all their details, and some of their mutual inconsistencies affect the doctrinal exegesis of particular passages. But these variations, it can be shown, leave unaffected the fact that the general and spiritual teaching of the versions in question is essentially the same.

ingly, human peculiarities of style and method, and human limitations, appear in Scripture.

§ 2. It is not our task to pass judgment upon what are called the results of modern criticism, except so far as they determine theological conceptions. Moreover, the work of modern critics is as yet incomplete, and the time has not arrived for a final estimate of results. It is a time for patient and courageous waiting.

Biblical criticism is nothing else than an exact and analytical study of the Scriptures, in the light of all relevant knowledge, for the purpose of testing and, if necessary, correcting existing views concerning them. It may be divided into (*a*) textual criticism, often called "lower," which is concerned with recovering the precise originals of the various parts of the Bible; (*b*) literary criticism, also called "higher," which investigates the dates, authorships, and, in some instances, the composite nature of the books of Scripture; (*c*) historical and (*d*) scientific criticism, which test the accuracy of the narratives and statements of fact that fall within the sphere of historical and physical sciences; (*e*) doctrinal and (*f*) moral criticism, which examine the credibility and divine source of the spiritual teaching and ethical ideals of the sacred writers.

The right to pursue such studies ought not to be disputed. The fact that Holy Scripture is given to us as possessing divine authority does not nullify the privilege and obligation of verifying the claim, and of investigating every phenomenon of the Scriptures that

may throw light upon the methods of divine inspiration and upon the relations between the divine and human factors in the production of the Bible. A Christianity that is afraid of scholarship, or of a searching scrutiny of its authoritative documents, is not worthy of the name and is not catholic. The fact is that, in the long run, criticism must vindicate whatever is true; so that, unless our religion is false, it must prove a most serviceable handmaid of catholic theology.[1]

§ 3. (*a*) The task of *textual criticism* is twofold: to ascertain as exactly as possible the original text of each several passage in Scripture; and to discover what has been interpolated by other hands.[2]

In fulfilling this task critics collate and compare ancient manuscripts; take note of early versions, and patristic quotations; and examine liturgical and other ecclesiastical documents which are likely to pre-

[1] See Watson, *Inspiration*, pp. 2–8. He calls attention to the fact that modern critics have advantages that were lacking to the best scholars of the past. They enjoy (*a*) a rich heritage of experience in biblical study; (*b*) possibilities of co-operation between scholars of many lands previously non-existent; (*c*) new knowledge of the ancient world. To these advantages may be added (*d*) an immensely enlarged *apparatus criticus;* (*e*) richer acquaintance with the religions of the Asiatic and Egyptian peoples; (*f*) more accurate knowledge of ancient languages. There are still, however, many gaps in biblical knowledge.

[2] Among useful works and essays to consult on textual criticism are Weir, *Short Hist. of the Heb. Text of the Old Test.;* Hastings, *Dic. of the Bible*, *s. vv.* "Text of the Old Test.," "Text of the New Test.," and "Textual Criticism of the New Test."; Kenyon, *Handbook to the Textual Criticism of the New Test.*; Lake, *The Text of the*

serve ancient readings. The value of the data thus considered is, of course, exceedingly unequal, and critics have to exercise the most discriminating care. Many baffling problems are encountered, and conjecture must often be depended upon where certainty is unobtainable. No critical text can be expected to secure a universal acceptance of scholars for all of its readings; and the variations which remain after critics have done their best are numerous.

Stated in this way the result seems disappointing and, to some, even alarming. But there is no real ground for discouragement or anxiety. Textual criticism has shown that we possess in substance what was originally produced by the sacred writers. The variations of manuscripts, versions, and critical texts are in an overwhelming majority of instances doctrinally non-significant, and tend to corroborate the contention that the Church has preserved the written Word with sufficient accuracy to warrant our confidence that what the sacred writers were inspired to produce is still available for the edification of the faithful.[1]

Some of the variations do indeed involve to an important degree the theological bearing of particular

New Test.; Hammond, *Outlines of Textual Criticism* (revised ed.); Vincent, *Hist. of the Textual Criticism of the New Test.;* Scrivener, *Plain Introd. to the Criticism of the New Test.* (4th edition).

[1] The variations prove the absence of collusion in altering the text, and the substantial agreement of so many independent texts assures us that the substance of the Word of God has been faithfully preserved.

passages; and a very few important proof texts, so called, are shown to be later interpolations.[1] But none of these results really prejudice, or in the slightest degree modify, the doctrinal teaching of Scripture as a whole; and textual criticism has increased rather than lessened the security with which we can verify catholic doctrine by an appeal to the Bible. And it ought not to be forgotten that the mere fact that a given passage is of later origin than the book in which it is found does not deprive it of biblical authority, that is, of course, if the Church has really received it as part of canonical Scripture. We may indeed be led to avoid dependence upon such a passage in argument with those who think otherwise; but the faithful ought to consider that that is the Word of God which the Church thus estimates. Textual criticism perhaps merely shows how it became a part of the Bible. The Church is alone competent to remove authoritatively anything from her sacred Canon.[2]

[1] The variations of theological importance are chiefly the following: (*a*) The concluding twelve verses of St. Mark are generally reckoned to-day as an addition, although ancient; (*b*) St. John v. 3–4, as to the moving of the water by an angel, is reckoned by the Revisers as not genuine; (*c*) Acts xx. 28. The word "God," in "The Church of God, which He purchased with His own blood," is uncertain. Among alternative readings is "Christ"; (*d*) 1 Tim. iii. 16. "God manifested in the flesh," should according to manuscript evidence read either "He who was manifested in the flesh," or "which was," etc.; (*e*) 1 St. John v. 7–8, of the three heavenly Witnesses, is unsupported by ancient Greek manuscripts.

[2] The Church's office of authenticating the Scriptures is treated of in ch. vi. § 6. It may be objected that certain interpolations are of later date than the settlement of the Canon. Of course, if an

§ 4. (*b*) The *literary criticism* of the Bible [1] has met with much opposition from conservative theologians, partly because those who are expert in that field are believed, in many instances, to be controlled in their generalizations by rationalistic presuppositions, and partly because some of their conclusions have been thought to militate against the divine authority of the Bible. But, whatever may be our estimate of the presuppositions and conclusions of particular critics or

interpolation is clearly post-canonical, its removal is not inconsistent with acceptance of ecclesiastical authority over the text of Scripture, even when theological exegesis of the immediate context is involved.

[1] The literature of higher criticism is very extensive and is constantly increasing. We mention but a few titles. Wellhausen's *Prolegomena of the History of Israel* completed, crystallized, and transmitted to England the view of the Pentateuch that now prevails. Baxter's *Sanctuary and Sacrifice* is an important reply to Wellhausen, the influence of which was shortened by its fierce tone. Driver's writings, especially *Introd. to the Literature of the Old Testament; Isaiah, His Life and Times; Book of Daniel;* and *Book of Genesis*, have had paramount influence in behalf of the modern views of the Old Testament. Modern views are also maintained in W. Robertson Smith's *Old Test. in the Jewish Church;* Ryle's *Holy Scripture and Criticism;* and Hastings' *Dic. of the Bible*, *s. vv.* "Hexateuch" (F. H. Woods); "Leviticus" (Harford-Battersby); "Deuteronomy" (Ryle); "Isaiah" (G. A. Smith), iii., ix., x.; and "Daniel" (E. L. Curtis); *The Higher Criticism*, Three Papers by S. R. Driver and A. F. Kirkpatrick. The best defence of traditional views is Orr's *Problem of the Old Testament.* Other conservative works are Bissell, *The Pentateuch; Lex Mosaica*, edited by R. V. French; Ellicott, *Christus Comprobator;* Green, *Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch;* and *Unity of Genesis;* Möller, *Are the Critics Right?*; McKim, *Problem of the Pentateuch; Moses and His Recent Critics*, edited by T. W. Chambers; Stubbs, *Biblical Criticism;* Pusey, *Lecs. on Daniel*, etc.

groups of critics,[1] we cannot afford, in the interests of truth, to repudiate the right or deny the value of a truly scientific literary criticism. If critics are controlled by erroneous presuppositions, their work is to that extent unscientific, but the remedy lies in better science, not in a repudiation of scholarship. Higher criticism is still in its infancy, and some at least of

On the Gospels, see R. J. Knowling's fine history of their criticism in Hastings' *Dic. of Christ, s.v.* "Criticism." Godet gives a history of criticism of St. Paul's Epistles, in *Introd. to St. Paul's Epistles*, pp. 20–60. Nash's *History of the Higher Criticism of the New Test.* is poor. Various Introductions to the New Testament are useful — *e.g.* those of Scrivener and of Salmon, and Pullan's *Books of the New Testament.*

[1] On the necessity of presuppositions of some kind, and their correct use, see *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. vi. §§ 5–7.

Among the unsound presuppositions alleged are the following:

(*a*) That immemorial tradition as to literary origins, because of its alleged uncritical nature, may be disregarded in determining upon whose shoulders the burden of proof rests;

(*b*) That no supernatural factor needs to be allowed for in making inferences from the literary peculiarities of Scriptural passages as to their sources and dates;

(*c*) That the religious development of Israel was purely natural, and is to be regarded as conforming wholly to the laws of human development elsewhere discovered;

(*d*) That a purely literary criticism of books many centuries old, and unique in many respects, can warrant the repudiation of ancient traditions and the acceptance of definite contrary conclusions as to the documents contained in the Old Testament, their dates, and their precise respective limits in the sacred text;

(*e*) That the expertness of critics in bringing relevant data to light gives a value to their subsequent generalizations based upon them which must entirely outweigh contrary generalizations made by other men of intelligence and based upon the same data.

what are called "results" [1] seem likely to undergo serious modification.

Properly speaking it does not pertain to Dogmatic Theology to pass judgment on the conclusions of higher critics, that is, when these conclusions are kept within the sphere of literary criticism. Their theological inferences touching inspiration, however, are not to be confounded with any possible results of literary criticism, which is concerned wholly with the human factors in the production of Scripture. Such results do indeed afford important data by which to judge of the *method* of the inspiration of the sacred writers, but scientific conclusions on such a subject require for their successful formulation the equipment of a dogmatic theologian as well as that of a literary critic. In particular it should be clear that the divine authority of the Sacred Canon is neither grounded in nor prejudiced by any conclusions that are likely to be established as to the dates, authorships, and literary unity or composite nature of the several books of the Bible. It is the divine sanction of the completed Scriptures that

Many critics who have abandoned traditional views would repudiate some or all of the above presuppositions, when brought to their attention. But it is quite possible that they underestimate the extent to which the plausibility of their own views is dependent upon such presuppositions.

[1] We need not suppose that every critic considers what he calls "results" to be final. They are usually adopted simply as the best working hypothesis for the time being, subject to possible modification with wider study. The fallacy lies often in thinking that a tentative hypothesis can outweigh and discredit universal tradition. Only positive and conclusive evidence can do this.

establishes their authority;[1] and that sanction is authenticated to us by the Catholic Church, and on grounds that are spiritually wider than literary criticism can successfully impugn.

Our conclusion is that Dogmatic Theology should rejoice in the rise of a truly scientific literary criticism of Holy Scripture; and, in treating of the methods employed by the Holy Spirit in moving and assisting the sacred writers, should make use of the data which it brings to light. But abundant patience is called for; and, just to the extent that a theologian is a genuine scholar, he will be cautious about drawing hasty inferences from the latest working hypotheses of expert critics. Time is a vital factor in the attain-

[1] We ought not to ignore the contention of many weighty theologians — *e.g.* Liddon, in the preface to the second edition of his sermon on *The Worth of the Old Testament* — that our Lord maintained the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, and made other assertions that are contradicted by modern critical scholars. In view of his own work on *The Kenotic Theory*, the writer will not be thought to doubt our Lord's freedom from the possibility of error.

The question as to whether He made assertions that have to be reckoned with in the problems of Old Testament literary criticism is exegetical; and does not involve catholic doctrine. The writer cannot discover evidence in the Gospels that Christ made any such categorical assertions on critical matters. He used the only practicable form of speech by which to refer to Old Testament books without dragging in matters extraneous to His purpose. It is not necessary to suppose that He employed a deceitful economy; nor is it necessary to treat His references to the Old Testament as determined in their phraseology by any other motive than identification for His listeners of the books which He cited, and the narratives to which He alluded.

If the writer's exegesis is at fault, and if our Lord did assert or demonstrably intend to imply what modern critics deny, we must

ment of permanent results; and the conclusions of experts, based as they are on considerations drawn from a limited field of investigation, must stand or fall by their ability to gain and retain the general acceptance of men of intelligence.

§ 5. (*c*) *Historical and scientific criticism* is concerned with narratives of fact, and with all assertions, *obiter dicta*, or allusions that have reference to matters which natural scientists are able successfully to investigate and put to proof. It is a matter of common knowledge that such criticism has usually resulted in an abandonment of the traditional opinion that no errors of any kind can appear in the Scriptures. That opinion has been thought to be an essential element in the doctrine of plenary inspiration, so essential indeed that its overthrow would nullify the doctrine that the Bible is the Word of God in all its parts, and has God

either accept our Lord's teaching or deny His claim to be our Lord and God. But the grounds on which our faith in Jesus Christ is based are so complete that, if such appearance of contradiction should emerge, and if certain critical views should be established as undoubtedly correct, we should necessarily conclude that the exegesis which made our Lord teach for fact what is not fact was mistaken. Our Lord may have been ignorant *in His human mind* of some things, but He was possessed, in the unity of His Person, of the divine mind as well as the human. That such a Person could teach error is to us absolutely incredible.

The question was brought into prominence by Gore, in *Lux Mundi*, pp. 358–361. The writer's own view is hinted at in his *Kenotic Theory*, pp. 219, 220; and is maintained by McFadyen, *Old Test. Criticism*. The view of Liddon is held by Ellicott, *Christus Comprobator*, chh. iv.–vi. Sanday takes Gore's position, substantially, in *The Oracles of God*, ch. viii.

for its principal Author. Naturally the deepest anxiety has been created by the growing belief among thoughtful men of every Christian land that the Scriptures do in fact contain many inconsistencies in their narratives which seem incapable of reconciliation, and embody many historical assertions, especially in the early chapters of Genesis, that simply cannot be harmonized with modern historical and scientific knowledge.[1] A dilemma has thus been forced upon those who insist that the Word of God written cannot contain erroneous history or science. They must either deny the validity of modern views of ancient history and cosmogony

[1] The state of the question as viewed by the generality of modern scholars can be ascertained conveniently in Hastings' *Dic. of the Bible, s. vv.* "Chronology of the Old Test.," "Chronol. of the New Test.," "Genealogies of Jesus Christ," "Flood," "Genesis," "Gospels," "John, Gospel of," "Joshua," "Moses," "Patriarchs," "Tabernacle," etc. Cf. also Driver, *Book of Genesis*, pp. xxv.–lxi, 19–35, 51–61, 78–80, 99–108, 136–137, 171–173; Watson, *Inspiration*, ch. xvii.; Dods, *The Bible*, Lec. V; Ryle, *Early Narratives of Genesis*, chh. i., ii.; *Holy Scrip. and Criticism*, ch. v.; Hogarth, *Authority and Archæology*. The list might be extended greatly. Undoubtedly some of the contentions of these writers are open to grave dispute; but if *any* of the statements in Scripture alleged to be erroneous are really so, the whole problem is raised.

Among modern defenders of the historical accuracy of Scripture — not all maintaining entire inerrancy, however — are Townsend, *Adam and Eve; The Story of Jonah;* Sayce, *Higher Criticism and the Verdict of the Monuments; Monumental Facts and Higher Critical Fancies; Early Hist. of the Hebrews; Patriarchal Palestine;* Hommel, *Ancient Hebrew Tradition;* Pinches, *The Old Test. in the Light of the Historical Records;* Boscowen, *The Bible and the Monuments;* Orr, *Problem of the Old Test.*, ch. xi.; Pusey, *Lecs. on Daniel;* Rose, *Studies on the Gospels;* Burgon, *Inspiration and Interpretation*, Serms. II.–IV., and App. D; Garbett, *God's Word Written*, ch. vii.–xv.;

in toto, or else abandon the divine authority of Holy Scripture.[1]

Attempts have been made to evade this dilemma; and Roman Catholic writers have been especially fertile in methods of vindicating the teaching of Leo XIII., that the doctrine of inspiration excludes every formal and positive error on the part of the human writers. Thus it is urged (*i*) that the inerrancy of Scripture pertains to the original text, and could be proved if we were able to remove all textual corruptions.[2] Two replies have been made; that the errors alleged, especially in Genesis, are too deeply ingrained in the whole narrative to be accounted for in such a manner;[3] and that the inerrancy of a Bible

Longridge, in *Inspiration and Six Other Papers*, ed. by Percival; Lee, *Inspiration*, Lec. VIII. This list also might be extended. Roman Catholic writers are committed to defend inerrancy, but often, in effect, concede errors of detail. Barry's *Tradition of Scripture* affords an example; and Tanquerey, *De Fontibus Theologicis*, §§ 56–58.

[1] A mere repudiation of what is called modern knowledge on the subject cannot avail with men at large. Intelligible and sufficient reasons have to be afforded for such repudiation.

[2] Referring to the teaching of Clement VI. that the Scriptures "contain throughout undoubted truth — which refers . . . to the manner in which Cain died," Wilhelm and Scannell say, *Manual*, Vol. I. p. 56, "as the Church guarantees the existing text of Holy Scripture only in matters of faith and morals, it is evident that 'throughout' refers primarily to the original text, and to subsequent texts only in so far as their identity with the original is beyond doubt." See also Longridge, in *Inspiration and Six Other Papers*, edited by Percival, pp. 37, 38; Forbes, *Thirty-Nine Arts.*, p. 93.

[3] Is it credible, it is asked for instance, that the alleged unhistorical nature of the narrative of the Deluge, if real, can be removed by restoration of the original text?

no longer in our possession is an academic question, an affirmative answer to which cannot rehabilitate the divine authority of the existing Bible, if such authority is dependent upon the inerrancy alleged.

(*ii*) It is urged again that the sacred writers wrote so as to be intelligible to their contemporaries, using the existing conventions of speech. For example, they describe natural phenomena relatively and according to their appearance, not scientifically, for science was not within the intended scope of their writing. Had they written otherwise, their language would have been enigmatical and would have seemed hopelessly untrue to their contemporaries. They did not treat historical and cosmological matters scientifically, for they were not seeking to enlarge scientific knowledge, but to set forth the divine plan and the spiritual significance of history as traditionally preserved.[1] The reply to this has been that, while such considerations may account for the errors of statement in Scripture, and justify a

[1] St. Augustine points out the danger of talking wildly about scientific matters on the alleged authority of Holy Scripture. *De Gen. ad Lit.*, i. 39. Hooker deprecates attributing too much to Scripture. *Eccles. Polity*, II. viii. 7. Butler's passage on the point is classic. "The general design of Scripture . . . may be said to be, to give us an account of the world, in this one single view,—as God's world: by which it appears essentially distinguished from all other books, . . . except such as are copied from it." *Analogy*, Pt. II. ch. vii. Pusey, in *Unscience, not Science, Adverse to Faith*, approvingly quotes Peter Lombard, *Sentent.*, II. dist. 23: "Man, by sinning, lost not the knowledge [of natural things] nor how to provide things necessary for his being. And therefore in Scripture man is not instructed in these things, but in the knowledge of the soul which by sinning he had lost."

method of inspiration which permitted existing notions of mundane events to remain uncorrected,[1] they do not refute the modern view that errors do appear in Scripture when it is treated from the point of view of historical and physical science.[2]

(*iii*) Then there is the resort to allegorical interpretation. If a biblical narrative is considered by exegetes to be out of correspondence with the facts, they maintain that God has not given it to us as a narrative of fact at all, but as a symbolic vehicle of spiritual truth.[3] The Eden narrative has been treated in this way by many catholic writers. It is answered to this that, whatever may have been the divine purpose in making such narratives a part of the written Word,[4] it is impossisible for one who reads the early narratives of Genesis intelligently to avoid the conclusion that the human writer or writers conceived themselves to be giving narratives of fact, for there is no trace of any other design on their part.[5]

[1] It is a truism of catholic theology that necessary doctrine includes only the contents of a revealed and saving faith, and has nothing to do with the settlement of extraneous historical and scientific questions. It follows that when an *a priori* and doubtful theory of the method of inspiration causes us to insist on the necessity of accepting every historical and cosmological statement of the sacred writers, we violate the catholic rule of faith, as well as bring the Church's dogmatic office into disrepute.

[2] It needs to be emphasized, of course, that such a point of view is not the divine or biblical point of view; so that such errors do not affect the authority of Scripture in its biblical purport at all.

[3] Origen carried the allegorical method to an extreme.

[4] The biblical purpose and meaning are inerrant in any case, for God cannot err.

[5] To acknowledge this does not stultify the belief that the divine

(*iv*) Finally, there is the plea, somewhat akin to the above, that we have need to remember that God can inspire different types of literary production — drama, poetry, edifying tales, and even myths — while purging out the pagan elements that are found in corresponding literatures of other ancient races. The word myth has a suspicious connotation,[1] and usually gives place to some euphemism. The point urged is that we must not treat every ancient narrative that exhibits the appearance of history as if it were historical in the modern sense. The boundary line between history and other types of literature among the ancients was

meaning of such narratives is richer, and is to be ascertained by other than merely literal interpretation, after the precedent established by New Testament writers. This richer meaning transcends what the human writer is likely to have had in mind. Its presence, therefore, does not justify imputing allegorical purpose to the writer.

[1] Current discussions of the subject of mythological elements in Scripture are often distressingly abortive and unilluminating. A myth, Baldwin says, *Dic. of Philos.*, *s. v.* "Myth," is "a story, the spontaneous product of a primitive unreflecting and uncritical consciousness, in which the forces of nature or other agents are represented in personal or quasi-personal forms, and as performing supernatural or superhuman actions." Myths are usually pagan in their origin and implications, although they need not be so. The proposition which ought to be insisted on is that, granting, as Liddon in effect does, that mythical elements were selected by divine inspiration and incorporated in purged forms into Scripture, their mythical source does not compel us to treat them as still on a mythical level. It has come to be realized by theologians that man is what he is, of a higher nature than his alleged progenitors, even if it be true that these progenitors were irrational beasts. So the contents of Scripture are what they are, divinely transfigured documents, even though manufactured out of inferior materials.

not clearly drawn.[1] The reply has been that there is much truth in this, but the evidence that Genesis was intended by its writers to give a true account of the past is too unmistakable thus to be explained away. Moreover, it is pointed out that New Testament writers indisputably treat some of its statements as historical which modern investigators allege to be unhistorical.[2]

§ 6. If modern knowledge is not wholly at fault — and men have ceased to allege that geological indications were placed in the earth by God to try our faith — we do not see how the contention can be maintained that the Word of God does not and cannot contain historical and scientific errors on the part of its human writers,[3] without abandoning belief in the plenary inspiration and divine authority of our existing Bible. The facts have to be faced.

How are we to face them? By examining the alleged ecumenical authority of the view that the inerrancy of the sacred writers in all their positive affirmations must be believed by those who accept the divine authority of Holy Scripture in all its parts. For our part we have never found evidence that such an opinion

[1] This line is taken by Barry, *Tradition of Scripture*, pp. 228–230, a book written under the *imprimatur* of the Roman Catholic Vicar General of Westminster. See also a suggestive treatment of "The Symbolism of the Bible," in Sanday's *Life of Christ in Recent Research*.

[2] For example, portions of the genealogy of Christ, given by St. Luke, iii. 35–38. Cf. also 2 St. Pet. ii. 4–5. These are but isolated samples.

[3] The human writers were not God, nor is it generally contended that they were full masters of the divine meaning and use of what they wrote.

has dogmatic authority,[1] and we seem to detect in many modern defenders of it an inarticulate consciousness of the necessity of qualifying their position. The method of their argument suggests that while intending to defend stereotyped *formulæ* as to inerrancy they are in fact shifting their ground.[2]

An opinion may be very general indeed in the Church and very ancient, and yet amount only to a speculative inference from some dogmatic truth, an inference which larger knowledge will modify. Thus the view that the several particles contained in our bodies at the moment of death will be gathered together into their former places at the resurrection held its own generally in the Church until modern science proved

[1] It is ancient, and has always commanded very widespread consent. This is so generally acknowledged that no catena need be given to prove it. But very few patristic writers clearly show their belief that the historical and scientific inerrancy of the sacred writers, *as distinguished* from the plenary inspiration of Scripture and the infallibility of its divine teaching, is an *article of faith*. Consensus of opinion must be differentiated in this and other matters from doctrine having the authority of an article of faith. The fact is that the inerrancy of the writers, considered as a distinct proposition, never received widespread and deliberate consideration in the Church until modern investigation forced the question upon the attention of all.

[2] Thus Fr. Longridge says "that we are not bound to any particular system of chronology, for none is laid down in the Sacred Books." Surely the sacred writers do make chronological assertions in detail, and to say as he does, that beyond the date of Solomon's Temple "we soon get lost in obscurity," is in effect to reject the inerrant authority of chronological statements in earlier narratives, which are abundant and often very clear, although their harmony is one of the problems of criticism. Cf. also Tanquerey, *De Fontibus Theologicis*, §§ 56–58; and Barry, *Tradition of Scripture*, ch. xi., esp. pp. 224–230.

that cannibalism at least makes such an event impossible, and that the identity and continuity of the body is not dependent upon the continued numerical sameness of its particles. It has come to be seen that we can maintain the dogma of the "resurrection of the flesh" without retaining the inference so long and so generally made from it.

Similarly, modern knowledge compels us to reconsider the alleged necessity that a divinely inspired Bible must contain no errors of statement on the part of its human authors. Such reconsideration causes us to take note more deliberately of the limitations of purpose in divine inspiration, and of the exact meaning of the dogmatic phrase "the Word of God." That phrase does not signify that God is the exclusive Author of Holy Scripture, but the principal Author.[1] The analogy of the hypostatic union, helpful as it is in considering the part of human factors in producing Scripture, has been pressed rashly in one detail. It is urged that just as we may not attribute error to Christ, even in his human mind, so we may not attribute error to the human authors of the written Word of God. It is overlooked that there is no hypostatic union of the

[1] As Tanquerey says, *De Fontibus Theologicis*, § 52, God is "*auctor*," *i.e. causa efficiens principalis*. He refers to Newman, *Nineteenth Century*, February, 1884, p. 188, in support of his language. Further on he says, "Duplex est igitur auctor Scripturæ: *Deus*, qui est causa principalis, et *sacer scriptor*, qui est causa instrumentalis, non quidem mere mechanica, sed intelligens ac libera." He quotes St. Thomas, *Quodlibet*, VII. 14, *ad* 5, "Auctor principalis . . . est Spiritus Sanctus," etc.

divine and human in Scripture. Whereas all the ideas, whether human or divine, that gained utterance in the words of Christ were the ideas of a divine Person, many of the ideas that are discoverable in Scripture, although they constitute an authoritative framework of the divine teaching, are the ideas of human persons. The method of inspiration, and the limitations of its purpose, permit them to gain free expression; and they are made to constitute the kind of organic setting of divine teaching which divine wisdom has found suitable.

The well-recognized distinction between revelation and inspiration is helpful here. The purpose of inspiration is not invariably revelation. Other purposes appear, although all of them are related to the master purpose which dominates the whole.

The inspiration of Scripture cannot be tested fairly except when its several parts are interpreted in their organic relations, and in connection with the purpose of inspiration. The non-doctrinal portions, and the uncorrected human elements of Scripture, constitute a divinely chosen framework of its spiritual teaching — the context in which God wills that we shall receive and consider it.[1] If this context were to be removed, the consequences would be serious, for the revelations in Scripture, many of them fragmentary, cannot be rightly understood except in the light of just such

[1] As Dr. Gold maintains in his *Sacrificial Worship*, pp. v., vi., the arrangement of the existing Old Testament, whatever may be the dates of the composition of its several parts, is "not accidental."

knowledge of contemporary conditions and beliefs as we gain from considering the very human narratives, types, dramas, mundane allusions characteristic of their age, etc., that God has incorporated into His written Word.

There being no hypostatic union between the divine and human factors of Holy Scripture, the analogy of ecclesiastical infallibility will more safely determine our convictions in this regard than that of our Lord's two natures. Just as our belief that the Church is infallible in doctrine is not disturbed when we find that her infallibility does not extend to questions of physical science and history, so the presence in Scripture of errors in history and cosmogony need not require us to repudiate the fundamental teaching of the Catholic Church that the Scriptures are infallible for their inspired purpose — in their divine purport.[1]

One more remark ought to be made. If the Scriptures, considered in their human aspects, were obviously

[1] We are glad to be able to cite Dr. Dods as realizing this. Convinced as he is that the sacred writers made many mistakes, he insists on the infallibility of the Bible for its purpose. "*Its infallibility must be determined by its purpose.* If you say that your watch is infallible, you mean, as a time-keeper; — not that it has a flawless case, not that it will tell you the day of the month, or predict to-morrow's weather . . . the discrepancies only become dangerous when they are used as a lever to subvert the infallibility of Scripture. And they are frequently thus used by persons who take advantage of the claim of literal infallibility advanced by well-intentioned but inconsiderate persons. . . . If it be said, is not all error important where Divine truth and eternal interests are concerned? we answer, No! else God would have provided for the absence of all error." *The Bible*, pp. 151 *et seq.*

inferior to contemporary literature of the same type, and could be discredited by comparison with it, we should be hard pressed, perhaps, to vindicate their lofty claim. But the precise opposite is true. Only when tested by rules that are inapplicable to ancient literature do the human excellence and historical trustworthiness of the Scriptures suffer disparagement. The fact is that no other collection of writings, equally ancient, begins to approach the Sacred Scriptures in its value for historical students. Only the laudable habit of associating the Bible with religious uses prevents men generally from realizing this. If archæology sometimes challenges the accuracy of a biblical writer in particulars, its confirmations of the historical value of the Old Testament are numerous and important.

Our conclusion is that, except when the exactness of a biblical narrative is seen to condition the truth of its divine purport, we are not required to defend the inerrancy of the sacred writers in history and cosmogony in order to maintain without compromise the doctrine of plenary inspiration, as signified by the proposition, "The Bible is the Word of God" and "has God for its principal Author." Without feeling compelled hastily to accept the latest hypotheses of scientists, we are in a position to wait patiently and without fear for whatever results may be finally established by modern scholars.

§ 7. (*d*) *Doctrinal and moral criticism* remain to be considered. That relatively defective teaching is to be found in the Old Testament cannot be denied intelligently. And divine authority seems at times to be

enlisted in the sanction of ideals and practices which an enlightened Christian conscience is compelled to reject.[1] But any difficulty that is felt on this account may be met by the fact, which a study of Scripture proves, that the method of divine revelation to the Church of God was gradual, and adapted to the requirements of human education. Economy is always observed in revealing divine truth. That is, revelation is never wasted or given before men are capable of receiving it. Their capacity is subject to the laws of human growth, and involves for its development a long course of educational discipline, accompanied by gradual teaching of truth. "Line upon line," and "precept upon precept," is the method of such teaching, with "milk for babes."[2] No other method is possible, in the nature of things, if human nature is to remain human. Moreover, the dulness which sin has caused to the human understanding adds to the slowness of this process.[3] That God orders the method of

[1] Our Lord acknowledged the divine authority of the Old Testament. St. Matt. v. 17–19; xi. 13, 15; xxii. 29, 32; St. Mark vii. 13; St. Luke xvi. 17, 31; St. John v. 39; x. 35. Yet He taught with equal explicitness that it contained matter which required correction; that it permitted practices contrary to the real mind of God; and that certain of its concessions and requirements were temporary, and to be abolished among His own disciples. St. Matt. v. 21–22, 27–28, 31–32, 38–44; xix. 3–9; St. Luke xvi. 16; St. John i. 17.

[2] Isa. xxviii. 9–13; Heb. v. 12–14. Cf. Heb. i. 1, "in many portions." Also St. John xvi. 12.

[3] This dulness sometimes becomes an absolute bar to the reception of divine instruction, and is then treated as a reason for withholding it. Cf. St. Matt. xiii. 9–15. The phrase "judicial blindness" describes this condition.

revelation so as to meet these conditions is not an evidence of weakness, or of that kind of economy which means deceit, but of wisdom and loving condescension, or, in cases, of protection of truth from desecration.[1]

But it is involved in this human limitation, and in the progressive method of education and teaching which is demanded, that the earlier stages of revelation should leave much error, both doctrinal and moral, uncorrected and seemingly sanctioned.[2] This seeming sanction is in reality nothing more than provisional allowance until higher ideals can be imparted. The errors which are overlooked, and even used, by God, are such as have to be left uncorrected, if the human mind is not to be diverted from the lessons of the hour, and thrown back into confusion and perhaps hopeless revulsion from God.

Such considerations help us to meet the difficulties which are caused by the presence of erroneous religious conceptions and immoral practices in the Old Testament — conceptions and practices which are apparently regarded by the earlier writers of Scripture as divinely warranted. For instance, some of the Old Testament writers appear to look upon divine promises and judgments as having this life for the sole sphere of their

[1] Our Lord is commending the divine example to His disciples when He says, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet," etc. St. Matt. vii. 6.

[2] For example, the reason why Moses did "command to give a writing of divorcement," contrary to the real mind of God from the beginning, is explained by our Lord to be the hardness of Israel's heart. St. Matt. xix. 3–9.

fulfilment. The realization that such a view makes human life a baffling enigma, and obscures divine justice, came slowly.[1] The Old Testament patriarchs did not suppose that death meant extinction, but their notions of the future life were too vague to relieve the pressure of life's problems;[2] and the Israelites could not be placed suddenly in the larger mental atmosphere of the Christian doctrine of immortality. But truths were unfolded which prepared them to take a wider personal outlook, although in terms adapted to their present limitations. Immediate and earthly rewards and judgments were made to do the duty of a more adequate conception of human destiny. But the divine judgments implied personal ideals that demanded a wider sphere than this earthly life for their realization. In due time the resulting intellectual unrest was met by the intimations of later prophets and the more definite revelation of Christ.[3]

[1] It was the lack of allowance for a future life that made Job's friends take for granted that his present sufferings constituted a proof of some hidden wrong-doing on his part. And this limitation of view is not adequately cleared up by the words attributed to God, or by the outcome of the drama. The unrelieved assertion of the Preacher in Ecclesiastes that "all is vanity" does not read like the words of one who realizes that the value of this life is vindicated by its probationary relation to a future one.

[2] The Old Testament conceptions of the future life are set forth by Salmond, *Christian Doctrine of Immortality*, Bk. II.; and Gayford, *Future State*, ch. i. Cf. Gibson, *Thirty-Nine Articles*, vii. (Vol. I. pp. 287–294).

[3] The contrast between Old and New Testament teaching on immortality is punctuated by St. Paul when he tells us that Christ "brought life and incorruption to light through the Gospel." 2 Tim. i. 10.

The subject of penal justice suggests another illustration of the divine method. The early idea of such justice prevalent in Israel was exceedingly crude and inadequate, and involved immoral implications. Justice and power were not sufficiently distinguished, and the right of individuals was submerged in the right of larger and mightier human entities. Rewards and penalties of individual wrong doings were inflicted on families and tribes. The wisdom and patience of God were displayed by His helping the Israelites to outgrow crude notions, rather than by revealing ideals which they were as yet unable to appreciate. In the meantime the administration of justice was emphasized. Thus justice was given a prominent and spiritual place in Hebrew thought, and existing notions of it began to lay bare their crudeness, the process being helped mightily by the general progress of Israel under divine tutelage. There came a time when it was impossible for a man of God to punish individual crime in the way that Joshua believed himself to be authorized to punish Achan. "The soul that sinneth *it* shall die," [1] became the recognized principle of Israel when they had learned the lesson intended from the beginning.

Similar lines of thought account for the seeming divine approval of polygamy and concubinage; [2] for

[1] Josh. vii. 15, 24–26 and Ezek. xviii. 1–28.

[2] Cf. Exod. xxi. 10 and Deut. xxi. 15–17. The concubinage of Abraham and of Jacob is nowhere rebuked, and the polygamy of various Old Testament saints is seemingly acquiesced in by God. The Mormons have within the memory of living men revived polygamy on the basis of an appeal to the Old Testament.

the permission of divorce,[1] etc. The hardness of Israel's heart could only be remedied by long-suffering, and waiting for the time of reformation.[2]

It remains to say that the trend and goal of the divine method constitutes its justification, and the earlier stages of the process as recorded in Scripture are to be interpreted in the light of this trend and its result. The result, it is hardly necessary to say, is found in the teaching and character of the Word Incarnate, summed up in the Christian faith, and in the ideals inculcated by the Catholic Church.[3]

II. *Interpretation*

§ 8. As we have seen, historical Christianity requires us to regard Holy Scripture as one of the two immediate sources of the supernatural data of theology. As its spiritual teaching comes from God, this teaching is not subject to correction, although it needs to be rightly understood. Holy Scripture contains, either directly or impliedly, every article of the faith. But these articles are exhibited in various ways, and are imbedded in a long series of sacred narratives, prophe-

[1] Deut. xxiv. 1, 2. Cf. St. Matt. xix. 3-9.

[2] Heb. ix. 10.

[3] This whole subject is suggestively treated in Mozley's *Ruling Ideas of Early Ages.* See also Orr, *Problem of the Old Test.*, ch. xii. Pt. III.; Romanes, *Thoughts on Religion*, pp. 180–184; Watson, *Inspiration*, ch. iii.; Temple, *Bampton Lecs.*, pp. 136–158. Orr points out that revelation in progress is responsible only for what it newly introduces, not for what survives uncorrected. The fathers treated difficult moral actions, described without comment, as types. Cf. Irenæus, *Adv. Hær.*, IV. xxxi. 1.

cies, poetical productions, Gospel messages, epistles, apocalypses, etc. The wealth of illustrative matter contained in the Scriptures is very great, and they are serviceable, not only for Dogmatic Theology, but for every branch of sacred learning.

§ 9. Holy Scripture exhibits to us the supernatural data of theology in a manner analogous to the exhibition of natural data by the phenomena of nature and secular history. It introduces us, in brief, to a spiritual world in which we are able to study the truths of God in their concrete embodiments, and in a multitude of objective relations.

An important task of theologians is to get behind the particulars thus presented, and by generalization to arrive at knowledge of the fundamental truths and principles which they embody. Holy Scripture is a sphere of scientific induction; and no biblical exegete is justified in hoping to understand the Scriptures adequately, or even correctly, who does not apply the inductive method, comparing Scripture with Scripture, and testing every conclusion by all relevant particulars that can be discovered.[1]

There are, of course, other conditions of success, just as there are in the study of nature. These conditions include personal capacity and sound presuppositions. Just as natural scientists require natural gifts and suitable training for their work, so biblical exegetes require supernatural gifts and spiritual discipline,

[1] Newman, *Arians*, ch. ii. § ii, opening paragraph, gives a hint of this.

for spiritual things are "spiritually investigated" — [1] a strictly scientific proposition. Furthermore, just as natural scientists have to learn and take into account the results of previous investigation in their chosen fields, and are not able to achieve truly scientific results if they fail to do this, so biblical exegetes must come to their work with minds charged with what is already known concerning the truths which Scriptural inductions confirm. They cannot in fact escape presuppositions, and any attempt to banish them is as unscientific as a natural scientist's attempt would be to cultivate crass ignorance of his science as a preliminary condition of his consideration of its data. Scientists have need, indeed, whether concerned with the natural or with the supernatural, to be conscious of their presuppositions, and to verify them by inductive study of such data as are available and relevant. They should also be ready to modify or abandon any presuppositions that are found to be inconsistent with indisputable facts. But to disparage presuppositions altogether is to invite failure.[2]

§ 10. (*a*) The biblical exegete, then, begins his work with presuppositions; and, if he is a sound exegete, he will assume as his working hypothesis that the ecumenical faith of the Christian Church is a true summary of the revelations gradually made through many ages and imbedded in Scripture. No doubt his

[1] 1 Cor. ii. 14.

[2] On the necessity of presuppositions, see *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. vi. Pt. II.

conviction on this point is grounded in the promise that the Spirit who inspired biblical writers also guides the Church into all the truth; but, apart from such doctrine, he comes to his task with knowledge of the fact that the agreement of Scripture in its fundamental teaching with the historic faith of the Church has been verified in every age, and is as firmly established as any scientific proposition can be established.

When taken in their biblical context, all the Scriptures are concerned, either directly or remotely, with the various elements of the catholic faith and religion. The catholic faith, therefore, constitutes the key to the meaning of Scripture — the primary rule of its fundamental interpretation. The Bible exhibits the gradual process of revelation of what the Church has received and is guided to teach and define in its vital substance.[1]

[1] Cf. ch. vi. § 1, *b* and *c*, above. Even our Lord consented to have His teaching tested by Scripture. But no Christian will say that the Scriptures may be interpreted otherwise than as agreeing with and embodying His teaching. See Jackson, *Works*, Bk. III. ch. xx., on this point. That the Church gives and uses the Bible to prove her teaching, see St. Luke i. 4; Acts xvii. 11. But with guidance in its interpretation. Acts viii. 30, 31.

Irenæus, *Adv. Hær.*, V. xx. 2, describes the Church as the refuge and paradise wherein to be brought up by nourishment on the Lord's Scriptures. Tertullian, *De Præsc. Haer.*, xix., insists that the Scriptures belong to the Church, not to heretics. Cf. Augustine, *De Moribus Eccles.*, lxi. A patristic catena is given by Waterworth, *Faith of Catholics*, Vol. I. pp. 341–357. The mind of the fathers was crystallized in Canon XIX. of the Quinisext Council, which prescribes "gathering out of Holy Scripture meditations and determinations of the truth, and not going beyond the limits now fixed,

Details of scriptural exegesis require for their investigation and proper exhibition the work of scholarship, and the exercise of private judgment. The Church does not undertake to make such labour and judgment unnecessary, or to forbid it. Every biblical commentary worthy of the name is the result of scholarship, and contains many expressions of private judgment for which no ecclesiastical authority can be given.

But there is a limit beyond which private judgment may not go, a guiding principle by which scholarship, if it is enlightened, will be controlled. No passage of Scripture may be interpreted in such wise as to contradict the Church's faith, for that faith is a summary of the fundamental purport of Scripture, assimilated by the Church under divine and corporate guidance.[1]

nor varying from the tradition of the God-bearing fathers," etc. The Vincentian rule of faith is given ostensibly as a means of determining between conflicting interpretation of Scripture. *Comm.* ch. ii.

On this subject see Field, *The Church*, Bk. IV., ch. xvi.; Hooker, *Eccles. Polity*, II. vii. 3; Thorndike, *Prins. of Christian Truth*, Bk. I. ch. vi. §§ 1–3; Beveridge, *Works*, Vol. I. pp. 116 *et seq.*; Waterland, *Works*, Vol. I. p. 542; Palmer, *The Church*, Vol. II. pp. 45–48; Darwell Stone, *Christian Church*, pp. 365–368; Gore, *Creed of the Christian*, pp. 61–63; McLaren, *Cath. Dogma*, ch. x. The last named writer says, pp. 81, 82, "Because written under the authority of the one Lord, by the inspiration of the one Spirit, it contains the one faith of the Church." The Anglican Canon of 1571 requires preachers to draw necessary doctrine from Holy Scripture *and* from "what the catholic fathers and ancient bishops have collected from the same doctrine." The Lambeth Conference of 1878 declared the faith contained in the Scriptures to be "summed up in the Creeds, and affirmed by the undisputed General Councils."

[1] The issue between catholics and protestants here is often misunderstood. It does not concern the *right* of private judgment,

This suggests what is meant by saying that the Church is the interpreter of Scripture. She teaches the faith which the Scriptures are inspired to embody and illustrate, and thus she teaches the fundamental meaning of Scripture as a whole. If this controlling fact is allowed for, a fact that a truth-seeking scholarship may not disregard, the exegete is not at fault in exercising his own scholarly judgment in the interpretation of particular passages of Scripture. The truth is that he must exercise his own judgment, if he arrives at any conclusions. The results of correct scholarship will exhibit the degrees and manners in which the several elements of the catholic faith and religion have been imbedded in sacred literature by the Holy Spirit.[1]

§ 11. (*b*) Another presupposition of biblical exegesis is that no passage can be interpreted rightly so as to contradict the divine teaching of other passages of Scripture. One Scripture, therefore, should be interpreted, *qua* Scripture, in harmony with another.[2]

which is exercised by all, but the *soundness* of a judgment that rejects the authority of ecclesiastical dogma. The judgment which accepts and allows for dogma is as truly private judgment as any other; but, as we show elsewhere, it is better advised than one which repudiates dogma. See Bramhall, *Works*, Vol. I. pp. 49–50; McLaren, *Cath. Dogma*, ch. xii.

[1] Cf. Jackson, *Works*, Vol. XII. pp. 175 *et seq.;* Palmer, *The Church*, Vol. II. p. 46; Moehler, *Symbolism*, § 42.

[2] Article VII. says, "The Old Testament is not contrary to the New: for both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to Mankind by Christ," etc. Art. XX denies that the Church may "so expound one place of Scripture, that it be repugnant to another." Augustine says, "Multum et solidè significatur ad Vetus Testamentum timorem potius pertinere, sicut ad Novum

This canon of interpretation requires discrimination in its application. It has reference to the divine meaning of Scripture. That conflicting ideals and notions are recorded in Scripture cannot be denied truly. They lie open to all biblical scholars. It is often necessary to extricate divine teaching from crude forms of thought of the age, which had to be employed as its vehicle, before we can discern its harmony with later and clearer revelations. Illustrations of this have already been given in our treatment of the gradual nature of divine revelation.[1]

§ 12. (*c*) A third presupposition grows out of the doctrine that God is the principal Author of Holy Scripture. It is that we may not treat the conscious

dilectionem, quamquam et in Vetere Novum lateat, et in Novo Vetus pateat." *Quæst. in Exod.*, 73. Cf. his *De Doc. Christ.*, iii. 28; Irenæus, *Adv. Hær.*, II. xxvii.; IV. xxvi. 1; Clement Alex., *Strom.*, VII. 16; Athanasius, *Contra Arian.*, IV. 23, 24. The last named says that to separate the Testaments, so that one does not hold both, "is the device of Manichees and Jews, one of whom opposes the Old, the other the New." The Ante-Nicene fathers had to vindicate the Old Testament, and its harmony with the New, against the Gnostics.

It is a recognized rule that obscure passages should be interpreted by plainer ones bearing on the same subject. So Augustine, *De Doc. Christ.*, iii. 2. Cf. Bull, *Examen Censuræ*, Strict. i. § 2. Reliance on proof texts, divorced from their context, is apt to involve interpretations that fail to agree with the rest of Scripture. The practice is adversely criticised by Athanasius, *Ep. ad Serapion*, i. 17; Cyril Jerus., *Catech.*, xvi. 24; Irenæus, *Adv. Haer.*, V. xiii. 2; Basil, *S. Spir.*, iii. 5.

On the general principle, see Liddon, *Divinity of our Lord*, pp. 45–49; Beveridge, on Art. VII; and Cary's *Testimonies to the Thirty-Nine Articles*, pp. 121–124, where a patristic catena is given.

[1] Cf. § 7 of this chapter.

intention and meaning of the human authors as necessarily constituting the full meaning of Holy Scripture. In some instances, no doubt, we underestimate the spiritual understanding and meaning of the writers;[1] but, none the less, the mind of God that they embodied in the Scriptures was a larger mind than they were capable of understanding adequately. They wrote more significantly than they knew, and the richer meanings of what they wrote could only become apparent at a later stage in sacred history.[2]

The task of ascertaining precisely what each human writer was conscious of meaning is, of course, important; for the divine meaning is related to this, and what the writer himself meant to say constitutes the divinely chosen vehicle of what God teaches to those who read each Scripture in the light of later history and fuller divine revelations. The results of investigation into the human meanings of Holy Scripture constitute what is called "biblical theology." This science takes note of the dates, contemporary conditions, personal circumstances, and other characteristics of the several writers, and seeks to exhibit the precise content and growth of

[1] This mistake appears in the habit of depending upon arguments from silence, as if the several writers "knew nothing" of other aspects of truth than those which are exhibited in their writings. It is this mistake that causes certain rationalistic scholars to regard the New Testament writers as setting forth contradictory conceptions of Christian doctrine and practice.

[2] What is called mystical interpretation is concerned with ascertaining the larger and divine meaning of Scripture. We consider the subject in § 15, below. On the inability of the prophets to understand the full meaning of their own prophecies, see 1 St. Pet. i. 10–12.

religious thought as embodied in the literary products of successive writers and different ages in Israel's history.

Such study helps a biblical exegete to understand more clearly the human conditions which attended divine teaching and inspired prophecy, and which determined the methods of inspiration. But biblical theology becomes positively misleading when taken to exhibit the full meaning of Holy Scripture.

§ 13. The diversity of Scripture, in relation both to literary form and to the immediate purposes of its several portions, is very great indeed. Methods of interpretation, therefore, vary correspondingly. There can be no inflexible rule.[1] Three methods stand out with peculiar distinctness in the history of biblical hermeneutics, viz.: the literal or grammatical, the tropical or figurative, and the mystical.

(*a*) The *literal* or grammatical meaning of Scripture comes first. It ought always to be sought, and may not be contradicted or ignored in seeking the figurative and mystical meaning. The divine meaning of Scripture is grounded in its letter, even when transcending its grammatical sense. But the grammatical meaning

[1] A satisfactory manual of biblical hermeneutics — one which does justice to the mystical method and at the same time does not overlook the requirements of sane scholarship — has yet to be produced. Abundant materials are available in both ancient and modern literature. For example, see St. Augustine's discussion of the Rules of Tyconius. in *De Doc. Christ.*, iii. 30–37. The whole work is suggestive. Anglican writers discuss various aspects of the subject: *e.g.* Field, *The Church*, Bk. IV. ch. xviii.; Andrews, *Pattern of Cat.*

is at times a vehicle of deeper ideas, ideas which involve for their understanding a wider knowledge of scriptural teaching than the particular passage affords, when considered by itself. So it is that biblical scholars who absorb themselves too exclusively in grammatical and critical exegesis miss much of the divinely inspired teaching of Scripture.[1]

§ 14. (*b*) The *tropical* method is applied to such scriptural phrases, passages, and books as were intended by their writers to exhibit figurative meanings. These are usually divided into fables, parables, and allegories.[2] The parables of our Lord afford conspicuous examples. Their literal meaning should be ascertained,

Doc., pp. 58–61; Jackson, *Works*, Bk. VII. chh. xii.-xix.; Waterland, *Works*, Vol. IV. pp. 151–165, 332, 345; Liddon, *Life of Pusey*, Vol. I. pp. 411, 412; Westcott, *Introd. to the Study of the Gospels*, pp. 59–67; Owen, *Dog. Theol.*, ch. ii. § 5. Among a multitude of Roman Catholic discussions may be mentioned Wilhelm and Scannell, *Manual*, Vol. I. § 17; Schouppe, *Elem. Theol. Dog.*, Tract IV. §§ 112–129; Barry, *Tradition of Scrip.*, chh. xi.–xiv., *passim*.

[1] The ancient school of Antioch erred in this way; and their exaggerated emphasis on the letter led some of its members into heresy. Their one-sidedness was due partly to reaction from the opposite extreme of Origen and the Alexandrian school. St. John Chrysostom was free from the limitations of the Antiochene school. See Newman, *Arians*, ch. i. §§ 1–3, and note 1 of App.; Lightfoot, *Epis. to Galat.*, pp. 228–230; *Dic. of Christian Biog.*, *s. vv.* "Theodorus of Mopsuestia" and "Diodorus."

St. Augustine urges that we should ascertain that meaning which the sacred writer intended. *De Doc. Christ.*, i. 36, 37; and all competent exegetes take this for granted.

[2] See *Jewish Dictionary*, *s. v.* "Allegory"; Hastings, *Dic. of the Bible*, *s. vv.* "Allegory" (where a history of allegorical and mystical interpretation is given) and "Parable."

but no argument is required to vindicate the necessity of going on to ascertain the tropical or figurative sense.[1]

§ 15. (*c*) There are indications in Scripture itself that some of its purely historical narratives have allegorical meanings in addition to their human and historical senses.[2] *Mystical interpretation* is concerned with this deeper meaning — a meaning which transcends that of the sacred writers,[3] but which was infused by divine inspiration. It is based upon the assumption that the whole course of revelation from the beginning was determined by the Spirit with reference to the result — the faith of the Gospel. The Old Testament, therefore, is treated as foreshadowing what was to come in many portions and in many manners,[4] although enigmatically. Its full meaning could not be understood, except in the light of later events and more explicit revelations.[5] The Christian exegete, however, discerns the end in the beginning. He sees that the Law is a pedagogue[6] leading to Christ, and

[1] Trench's *Notes on the Parables of our Lord* afford fine examples of this kind of interpretation.

[2] In Psa. lxxviii. the history of Israel is ostensibly summarized as parabolic. St. Paul treats the history of Abraham's two sons allegorically. Gal. iv. 22–31.

[3] The fact that the mystical sense transcends the meaning consciously intended by the sacred writer distinguishes it from the tropical sense. The writer was inspired to write more significantly than either he or his contemporaries understood.

[4] Heb. i. 1.

[5] Cf. 1 St. Pet. i. 10–12; 1 Cor. x. 11.

[6] *παιδαγωγός*. Gal. iii. 24.

that all the Scriptures are somehow concerned with Christ.[1]

In brief, the mystical method consists simply of reading the earlier Scriptures in the light of later revelation, as intended by the Holy Spirit to be introductory thereto, and as exhibiting this intention to an enlightened reader: just as one interprets what he sees in the darkness of night, and guides his steps, with the assistance of knowledge gained by daylight. Such a method obviously requires care and skill in its employment. The aim of sound exegesis is to ascertain the divinely inspired meaning of Scripture. No doubt Scripture suggests to certain minds more than it was designed by the divine Spirit to suggest; and we may profit often by associations of ideas that spring from our own devout fancies rather than from correct exege-

[1] Cf. St. Luke xxiv. 25–27. Note also St. Matthew's frequently repeated phrase, "that it might be fulfilled," often referring to fulfilments which are not obviously suggested by the Old Testament passages referred to, considered by themselves. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews treats the ancient ritual mystically. See ch. ix. 9; x. 1. In ch. vii. he thus treats the narrative of Abraham's meeting with Melchizedek. Cf. the seventh *Art. of Religion*, and St. Augustine's famous saying that "as the Old Testament is patent in the New, so the New Testament is latent in the Old." *Quæst. in Exod.*, 73.

On the whole subject, see Thorndike, *Prins. of Christian Truth*, Bk. I. ch. xiii., who gives numerous instances from the New Testament; Burgon, *Inspiration and Interpretation*, chh. v., vi.; Newman, *Arians*, ch. i. § iii. 3; Liddon, Serm. on *The Worth of the Old Testament*, Pt. III; *Tracts for the Times*, lxxxix.; Lee, *Inspiration*, pp. 148–157; Westcott, *Introd. to the Study of Gospels*, pp. 63, 64; Sanday, *Inspiration*, pp. 402–406; Kirkpatrick, *Divine Library*, pp. 136–141; Watson, *Inspiration*, pp. 138–144.

sis. But the real meaning of Scripture should be sought, and our own fancies should be excluded carefully from scientific exegesis. The point to be ascertained in each case is, What and how much meaning has divine inspiration and foreknowledge imparted to this passage?

It is clear that mystical interpretation ought not to stultify the literal and grammatical meaning of Scripture. And it should not be fanciful, artificial, or far-fetched.[1] The reasonableness that is to be looked for in divine methods is surely inconsistent with such a treatment of the results of divine inspiration.

It is also clear that there is no specific and indisputable means by which to demonstrate the correctness of particular interpretations of this kind.

[1] St. Augustine adopts the precarious rule that unedifying passages of Scripture are to be taken mystically. See, *De Doc. Christ.*, iii. 10 *et seq.* Origen and his successors resorted to an allegorical interpretation when dealing with narratives that seemed to contain historical errors. The experience of many centuries has taught scholars that such methods do not enable us to ascertain the real meaning of Holy Scripture. See Darwell Stone, *Outlines of Dogma*, note 10, on patristic treatments of the accounts of creation and the fall in Genesis. Cf. Salmon, *Infallibility*, pp. 162–167.

The predictive aspect of prophecy has been obscured by uncritical treatment and over precise interpretations. The prophets were not inspired for the purpose of putting men in possession of exact information about the future. They wrote with primary reference to passing circumstances and exigencies. Yet they were inspired to exhibit correctly the laws by which human events are divinely ordered, and thus there is a divinely intended correspondence between what they wrote and later events. This correspondence, however, does not usually lie on the surface. It requires deep study for its correct mastery. See Lee, *Inspiration*, pp. 183–186, 190–191; Kirkpatrick, *Divine Library*, pp. 144–147.

Accordingly, the value of mystical interpretation, which is very great when reasonably employed, is found especially in the sphere of practical edification and of confirmation of truths elsewhere set forth in direct terms. It does not lend itself to formal and evidential use, except in the very general way of exhibiting to spiritual minds the unity of all scriptural teaching. One may not expect to settle doctrinal controversies or prove Christian doctrines by mystical interpretations of Scripture.

But, when the faith has once been appropriated by a devout and docile mind, the letter of Scripture becomes transparent, and is seen to be the vehicle of truths, put there by God, which lie beyond the discovery of an undiscerning exegete, however skilful his analysis may be. A theologian who fails to appropriate this undercurrent of meaning in the Scriptures labours under very serious limitations.[1]

[1] Bishop Butler says, *Analogy*, Pt. II. ch. vii., "To say . . . that the Scriptures, and the things contained in them, can have no other or farther meaning than those persons thought or had, who first recited or wrote them, is evidently saying, that those persons were the original, proper, and sole authors of those books, *i.e.*, that they were not inspired."

CHAPTER VIII

THE RULE OF FAITH

I. *Exposition*

§ 1. We are now in a position, by way of résumé and practical conclusion, to sum up the results of our discussion so far as it determines the rule of faith. By the rule of faith is meant the formal method which ought to be observed in determining what is necessary to be believed for salvation, and what therefore should be treated as the fundamental and unalterable premises of theological science.[1]

Briefly stated, this rule requires that we should seek to ascertain that which is taught by the Catholic Church as necessary to be believed for salvation, and is contained in the Sacred Scriptures; for such doctrine, and such only, constitutes the necessary faith of Christians.[2]

[1] On the rule of faith, see St. Vincent of Lerins, *Commonitorium*, of which a convenient edition, with English translation, is published by Parker & Co., Oxford; Card. Veron, *Regula Fidei*, a mine of arguments against the later Vatican position; Palmer, *The Church*, Pt. III.; Gore, *Roman Cath. Claims*, ch. iv.; Ottley, in *Ch. Hist. Soc. Lecs.*, 2d Series, pp. 12–40. The present Roman Catholic position is exhibited in Wilhelm and Scannell, *Manual*, Bk. I. ch. v.; and given officially in *Concil. Vaticani Decreta*, Sess. IV. cap. iv.

[2] It needs emphasis that not every legitimate content of Dogmatic Theology is a necessary article of belief. Sound theology is indeed grounded in such articles, but its scientific aim involves the laying

It can be seen that our knowledge of saving doctrine is based upon an acceptance of the authority of both the Catholic Church and the Bible. These two are necessarily in agreement, since the teaching of both comes from the same divine source.[1]

But the manner in which the rule of faith requires us to depend upon the authority of the Church on the one hand, and of Holy Scripture on the other, is somewhat different. The Church is commissioned and guided by God to teach and define the faith. It is from her, therefore, that we learn its precise contents. On the other hand, all saving truth has by divine inspiration been imbedded in manifold ways in the Scriptures; and by their use we are able to verify, and enrich our hold upon, the truths which the Church teaches and defines. To put the matter summarily, the Church teaches and defines, while the Bible confirms and illustrates, everything that is necessary to be believed.[2]

down of many propositions that have not the certainty of faith. In common with other sciences, Dogmatic Theology is partly speculative, tentative, and progressive. Failure to realize this accounts for much of the controversy between theological and physical scientists.

[1] Cf. above, ch. iii. § 2, esp. note 1 on p. 68; and ch. vii. § 10.

[2] Cf. the aphorism, "The Church to teach, the Bible to prove." Salmon, *Infallibility*, p. 125, gives Dr. Hawkins of Oriel credit for originating the phrase. It is used by Gore, *Mission of the Church*, Lec. II. i.; and by Ottley, in *Ch. Hist. Soc. Lecs.*, 2d Series, pp. 12–21. Clement of Alex., in *Strom.*, VII. 16, speaks of the true gnostic, grown old in the Scriptures, and maintaining apostolical and ecclesiastical orthodoxy in doctrine, as living according to the Gospel and discovering proofs in the law and the prophets. Palmer treats of proof from Scripture as including such deductions as can be shown to exhibit the real content of biblical teaching. *The Church*, Pt. III. ch. ii.

Nothing may be held that contradicts catholic doctrine, and nothing may be required to be believed as necessary for salvation that is not contained in the Scriptures.

Theoretically either Scripture or ecclesiastical teaching alone might be thought to be sufficient, but really and practically we need both for our guidance. The Scriptures contain all that we need to know; but in manners often adapted to conditions that no longer exist, in contexts that require careful consideration, and in language that requires authoritative interpretation.[1] On the other hand, the Church defines with sufficient fulness and precision what is necessary to be believed, and if technical orthodoxy constituted an adequate apprehension of divine truth, the docile disciple of the Church could dispense with any study of Scripture. But mere orthodoxy is not sufficient. The richer knowledge which is required by a believer who familiarizes himself with the manifold teaching of Scripture not only adds needed security to his faith, but enables him to appreciate its fuller significance and bearing. So it is that the Church and Scripture are both necessary factors in the production of a faith which is at once sound and adequate, and neither can safely displace the other or fulfil its function.[2]

[1] Gore, *Creed of the Christian*, pp. 63–66; Newman, *Arians*, ch. ii. § i. 3.

[2] See Gore, *Roman Cath. Claims*, ch. iv., who refers to Cyril of Jerus., *Catech.*, iv. 17, 33; v. 12; and Leo., *Epis.* xxviii. § 1, in support of his emphasis on the need of scriptural study. Anglican and Roman views of the relation between the Church and the Scriptures are

§ 2. This rule of faith appears simple enough in its statement, but it is often far from simple in its application by individuals. The precise teaching of the Church is rendered uncertain to many minds by the vagaries of those who are set to teach the Church's faith, and by the babel of rival Christian sects. And the controversies which are caused by divisions within the Catholic Church increase men's difficulty and uncertainty in ascertaining the Church's ecumenical teaching.[1]

Moreover, this confusion of doctrine increases immensely the difficulty of depending solely upon the teaching of Scripture. As St. Vincent of Lerins says,[2] "The Scripture being of itself so deep and profound, all men do not understand it in one and the same sense, but divers men diversely, . . . so that to one's thinking, so many men, so many opinions almost may be gathered out of it."

He proceeds to infer that "it is very necessary for

given by Ottley, in *Ch. Hist. Soc. Lecs.*, 2d Series, pp. 28–40. Cf. Wilberforce, *Prins. of Church Authority*, pp. 43–45. The Roman official language is to be found in the decrees of Trent, Sess. IV.; the Anglican in *The Articles of Religion*, vi., xx. There is a useful survey of the Roman position, with quotations from the Tridentine and Vatican decrees, in Darwell Stone's *Outlines of Dogma*, note 41.

[1] This difficulty may easily be exaggerated. It is a fact that those who are bent on abiding by the mind of the Catholic Church are at one, the world over, in the necessary articles of saving truth. Usually those who have the most difficulty have not fully submitted to the Church's working system, and sacramental discipline, or else demand too much in the matter of fulness and precision of authoritative definition.

[2] *Comm.*, ch. ii.

the avoiding so great windings and turnings of errors so various, that the line of expounding the prophets and apostles be directed and drawn according to the rule of the ecclesiastical and catholic sense." Thus we are thrown back upon the problem, What is this "ecclesiastical and catholic sense"? The answer which ought to be sufficient, and which in practical working has to be accepted by simple folk, is that it is what is taught as necessary to be believed by one's pastor, who holds his ministry for the express purpose of teaching officially the Church's mind. Certainly no one should reject his pastor's teaching unless he is competent to test its agreement with the Church's mind, and discovers that it cannot stand such a test.

The fact is that a rule is needed by means of which doctrines that are alleged to be catholic can be brought to the test of their agreement with the real mind of the universal Church, by those who are competent to undertake such a task. St. Vincent has formulated this rule in terms that are classic. He says,[1] "Within the Catholic Church itself we must take great care to hold that which has been believed everywhere, always and by all.[2] . . . And this we shall do if we follow universality, antiquity, and consent. We shall follow universality thus, if we acknowledge that one faith to be true which the whole Church throughout the world confesses. We shall follow antiquity, if we do not recede in any particular from those senses which were plainly

[1] *Comm.*, ch. ii.

[2] *Quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus.*

maintained by our holy elders and fathers. We shall likewise follow consent, if in this antiquity itself we hold the definitions and opinions of all, or at all events nearly all, the priests and doctors together."

In modern parlance this means that, in order to verify the catholicity of any teaching, we should ascertain whether it is now taught by all the Churches of Catholic Christendom, whether it has been taught by them from the beginning, and whether it has been maintained by the generality of representative theologians of every catholic school or type.[1] And it is to be observed that this last mark of consent is not found by a mere counting of heads or by reckoning majorities, as if all theologians were equally to be considered, but by inquiring whether the doctrine in question has been dissented from by any significant proportion of *representative* theologians. The opinions of eccentric individuals, recognized heretics, and schismatical theologians are, of course, not to be considered. It is also to be observed that the mark of universality is of primary importance, and can be found usually by means of a comparison of the existing formularies and official documents of the various portions of the Catho-

[1] If the doctrine in controversy is found to be defined in the catholic creeds, or in the decrees of faith of the Ecumenical Councils, this fact makes further inquiry unnecessary, of course; for these definitions set forth what the Church herself declares ecumenically to have been held in the Church *ubique et semper et ab omnibus*. The Ecumenical Councils, in effect, made use of the Vincentian rule in rejecting heresy and in defining the Church's real mind; and the results of their work are authoritative.

lic Church. Whatever teaching is discoverable in such documents everywhere will also be found to possess the marks of antiquity and consent.[1]

[1] It may be urged that Anglicanism owes it origin and nature to the reformation of the sixteenth century; so that the appeal of consistent Anglicans must necessarily be to the principles of the reformation.

The premise is not true, unless the term Anglicanism is used in a very superficial sense, as referring to non-essential accidents of ecclesiastical arrangements. It can be shown historically that the Anglican reformation was not the establishment of a new Church, for the ancient *Ecclesia Anglicana* continued in existence, and preserved the continuity of her doctrine, ministry, worship, and discipline. She merely threw off a foreign allegiance of human origin, and undertook not a revolution of her principles, but a reformation and purging out of what had obscured and corrupted them.

The principles which she sought to emphasize, and to which consistent Anglicans appeal, are happily summarized in the *Declaration on Unity* made by the American House of Bishops in 1886, *Journal* of *Gen. Conv.*, p. 80.

An appeal to the reformation should mean an appeal to what that movement was officially and professedly intended to restore and reassert, — not to anything peculiar to the sixteenth century, or to private views of the reformers. The formal principle of the Anglican reformation involved a reassertion of the Vincentian rule. It was a reformation, and so the emphasis was placed on the note of antiquity. This did not mean an appeal to early ages to the exclusion of later ages, but to the *continuous* teaching of the Catholic Church from the beginning, conveniently ascertained by consulting the Scriptures, the decrees of Ecumenical Councils, and ancient authors.

Article VI. asserts the necessity of limiting necessary doctrine to what is read in the Scriptures or can be proved thereby. This is reiterated in Article XX., which, however, affirms the authority of the Church "in Controversies of Faith," *i.e.* in disputes as to the doctrinal teaching of Scripture. The doctrines of the Ecumenical Councils are summarized and reasserted in the first five Articles. The ancient Creeds are declared to be binding in Article VIII. The reason given, that "they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy

§ 3. The Vincentian rule, above given, is not a rule for discovering, in the first instance, the Church's faith, but for verifying the catholic authority of doctrines

Scripture," is an ecclesiastical judgment; and Article XX. may not be interpreted as conceding to private judgment the right to interpret Scripture contrary to the creeds of the Church. Cf. Pusey, *Eirenicon*, I. pp. 38–41. The Convocation of 1571, which adopted the Articles in their permanent form, enacted that the clergy are to "teach nothing in their preaching, which they would have the people religiously to observe, and believe, but that which is agreeable to the doctrine of the Old Testament, and the New, and that which the *Catholic fathers, and ancient Bishops, have gathered out of that doctrine*." Canon xxx. of 1604 witnesses that it was "far . . . from the purpose of the Church of England to forsake and reject the Churches of Italy, France, Spain, Germany, or any such like Churches, . . . and only departed from them in those particular points wherein they were fallen both from themselves in their ancient integrity, and from the Apostolical Churches," etc.

The formal principle of Anglicanism is well defined in the Introduction to the resolutions of the Pan-Anglican Conference of 1878. This Conference urged the maintenance of "the Faith in its purity and integrity — as taught in the Holy Scriptures, held by the Primitive Church, summed up in the Creeds, and affirmed by the undisputed General Councils." The sum of the matter is that the fundamental principle of the Anglican reformation does not permit us to regard ourselves as independent of the rest of the Catholic Church. An appeal to the reformation involves an appeal to the teaching of the Catholic Church — *quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus*. For an Anglican catena on the Vincentian rule, see *Tracts for the Times*, lxxviii.; and Parker's edition of St. Vincent's *Comm.*, App.

Among the more important patristic references are Irenæus, *Adv. Hær.*, I. xxii. 1; Tertul., *De Præsc. Haer.*, xiii., xiv; Origen, *De Prin.*, i. 4; Clem. Alex., *Strom.*, vii. 15; Augustine, *Epis.*, cxlvii. 34; clxxxvii. 29; cxciii. 11. Cf. Bingham, *Christian Antiq.*, X. iii. iv; *Dic. of Christian Biog.*, *s. v.* "Faith, Rule of"; Field, *The Church*, IV. xiv.; Palmer, *The Church*, Pt. III. ch. iii. pp. 35–36, 58, 59.; McLaren, *Catholic Dogma*, ch. xv., xvi.; Stanton, *Place of Authority*, pp. 167–175; Luckock, *After Death*, ch. i.

said to be contained in that faith.[1] Moreover, it is a rule for scholars, for no others are capable of undertaking such verification with success. It is objected, therefore, that, unless some more simple and secure method is available by which ordinary people can assure themselves that they are in possession of the Church's mind, they will be left without sure guidance in matters pertaining to their eternal salvation. Roman Catholic writers make use of this argument to support their contention that to accept the *ex cathedra* definitions of the Papal See is the only safe and practical rule of faith.

This subject has been discussed elsewhere, and it is sufficient at this point to make three remarks. In the first place, the safety of such a rule depends upon the truth of the Vatican claim, that the *ex cathedra* teaching of the Pope is infallibly true and invariably exhibits the catholic mind. We have given reasons for doubting

[1] Inasmuch as the burden of proof lies on the shoulders of those who dispute the teaching of the existing ecclesiastical authorities, a failure to obtain sufficient data for full verification in the particulars of antiquity and consent ought not to disturb our confidence in receiving what is now taught by every portion of the Catholic Church. Such teaching presumably possesses the marks of antiquity and consent. The silences of ancient documents and writers do not of themselves prove that the fathers "knew nothing" of, or rejected, the doctrines which we seek to verify. The implicit faith of the ancients was, of course, richer than appears in their explicit phrases. Satisfactory catenas may be unavailable for doctrines that are none the less involved in the general position of the fathers. To prove that they did not hold a given doctrine we must cite from their writings language which is inconsistent with acceptance of it.

the correctness of such a claim. In the second place, the practical value of such a rule depends upon the possibility that ordinary folk should be able to determine with certainty what are *ex cathedra* teachings of the Papal See and what are not.[1] Finally, it is an acknowledged fact that many important doctrines of the Church have not been defined *ex cathedra* by the Roman See.

We must be controlled in our view of the rule of faith by the facts, and they require us to acknowledge that men are not altogether relieved by divine arrangements from the uncertainties that inhere in human delivery and appropriation of religious truth. Yet the catholic system secures that no one who seeks sincerely to submit to the Church's mind, and, as a vital element in such submission, commits himself loyally and faithfully to the Church's sacramental life and worship, will fail to appropriate the true and catholic faith sufficiently for his eternal welfare. Surely this should prove sufficient; and it is an advantage to souls, rather than a misfortune, that the method by which ordinary men can attain to saving knowledge is also the method by which to grow in grace and virtue. It is a mark of divine wisdom that the system of things which God has appointed in His Church does not permit men to divorce the interests of saving knowledge and of the spiritual life. The road to the fulness of divine truth in the Catholic Church is not hard to find, but is available to every sincere disciple of the

[1] See above, ch. v. § 18.

Church. In the nature of the case it can be made available to no others.

To travel this road it is only necessary to assume a docile attitude towards the Church's divinely appointed agents and instruments of teaching and grace — those agents and those instruments in particular which the believer's providential place in the Church militant, and his personal circumstances and capacity, make available.

No doubt controversies of faith will arise to trouble the most sincere truth-seekers, but no one who realizes that the burden of proof in such controversies lies always with a dissenting disciple or subordinate party to the controversy is likely to be led far astray. Certainly a mistake thus incurred will not, of itself, separate him from his Lord. Thus the docile layman will accept the teaching of his duly appointed pastor and teacher until he is possessed of proof, and is able to show, that the pastor has departed from what he was appointed to teach.[1] Such proof will normally take the form of appeal to the ecclesiastical formularies and other official documents that embody the Church's mind and by which both pastor and laymen are bound. Going higher, no one may dispute or reject the accredited and formal teaching of the provincial Church to which his obedience is providentially due until, and except so far as, he is competent and able to prove that

[1] If a layman has reason to believe that the teaching of his pastor is anti-scriptural, he will have reason to suspect its ecclesiastical warrant, of course.

such teaching is contrary to the mind and teaching of the Catholic Church at large.

It is the inalienable right and duty of individual believers to be guided in their faith by what they are personally convinced is the mind of the Catholic Church, or of the highest ecclesiastical authority whose teaching lies open to their intelligent consideration. Private judgment is involved here, but it should be concerned with arriving at authoritative ecclesiastical teaching, and ought not to oppose such teaching. Moreover, if any controversy comes to ecclesiastical adjudication, then the docile believer remembers that the "Church hath . . . authority in Controversies of Faith," and is the final judge of her own mind. This principle is assumed in all that we have said touching the task of scholars in verifying current doctrines by means of the Vincentian rule.[1]

§ 4. The Church has a living voice.[2] That is, she never ceases to teach positively what is necessary to be believed and practised for salvation. She does not, indeed, give dogmatic definitions in response to all questions put to her by the world or by her own children; nor do the dogmas that she has published define all the truths contained in her saving faith. But she

[1] The reader of this volume will recognize that it is also assumed that the teaching of Scripture may not be contradicted by the teaching of the Church. To ascertain the ecumenical mind of the Church is to ascertain what can be, and must be, capable of being verified by the Scriptures.

[2] This subject has been dealt with in another connection in ch. iv. § 7.

has sufficiently defined her mind, in formularies still enforced, to protect from fatal error all who are really docile to her teaching and loyal to her sacramental ways.[1] No others could be helped by more abundant dogmatizing. New errors may arise, but history shows that they correct themselves in time, among the faithful, either through their incongruity with ancient dogmas becoming apparent; or through scholarly criticism according to the Vincentian rule, the results of which gradually reach and determine the minds of unscholarly believers; or through the practical effect of faithfulness to the Church's working system, which tends ultimately to make every successive vagary appear alien.

Controversies may arise that concern speculative questions for which the Church has no divinely revealed answer; such, for example, as certain debated points connected with the mysteries of predestination and the present state of the departed. Such controversies settle themselves by their futility becoming clear, and by a cessation of anxiety for their solution. If the Church deals with them, she will usually take some method of shelving them, as did the English Church in the sixteenth century by the use of peace-making and non-specific general propositions in her *Articles of Religion.*

The universal Church continues to say the same

[1] Palmer, *the Church*, Vol. II. pp. 79–80, 82, shows that in practice men have to depend on the existing Church and her pastors for spiritual knowledge.

things in effect; and, in her formal dogmas, to recite the same phrases. In various ways her voice sounds in every age and in every genuine portion of her jurisdiction. And this living voice is infallible. That is, its teaching can always be depended upon when rightly apprehended. It is for this end — surely an important one — that the Church is made infallible touching saving truth, that teaching may continue to be given in the world which seekers after the way of eternal life can safely trust. But the blessing of an infallible guide is one thing; the degree of certainty with which fallible men accept her authority, or distinguish her voice in the medley of conflicting voices that are heard in this world, is quite another. Probability does not cease to be a very guide of life within the minds of individuals. But surely even an imperfect assurance that the Church is infallible in matters of salvation imposes upon us the solemn duty of accepting her guidance in that regard; and it is God's gracious provision that such trust will never be mistaken, but will, under the conditions that attend spiritual knowledge in any case, result in sufficient saving knowledge and life eternal.[1]

[1] Roman Catholic writers and many others, including Salmon, *Infallibility of the Church*, ch. vi., confuse infallibility in teaching with infallible guidance — *i.e.* production of infallible certainty in the individual believer. Salmon urges that to accept infallible authority we must be infallibly certain of its infallibility. He assumes everywhere, as do Roman Catholic writers too frequently, that the acceptance of ecclesiastical infallibility precludes any further inquiry or verification of the truth of ecclesiastical teaching. Is not God infallible? No Christian believer will answer "No." Yet belief in divine infallibility is not itself infallible, nor does such belief preclude rational

II. *Essentials and Non-Essentials*

§ 5. The catholic faith consists of the totality of doctrines that are taught by the Catholic Church as necessary to be believed by such as would be saved, these doctrines being also contained in Holy Scripture.

The necessity of belief thus maintained is clear when we consider that this faith has been made known to men on divinely inspired and divinely guided authority, so that a rejection of any one of its doctrines, however unimportant that doctrine may seem to be to the individual, signifies in effect a rejection of divine authority itself.[1]

This necessity is also due to the fact that the knowledge which we derive from the faith affords indispensable guidance in the way of life, that is, as to the line of conduct and discipline which is essential in order that we may enter upon and enjoy everlasting blessedness.

§ 6. We are utterly incompetent to say of any truth which has been divinely made known to us for our salvation that it may be rejected or even neglected without risk of eternal consequences. The contents

verification, so far as possible, of what is divinely revealed. Cf. above, ch. i. §§ 14, 18, 19.

[1] See Dr. Pusey, *Responsibility of the Intellect in Matters of Faith*, and a quotation from him in Liddon, *Life of Pusey*, Vol. IV. pp. 7, 8; Isaac Williams, *The Catechism*, Vol. I. p. 68; Jackson, *Works*, Bk. IV. ch. iv; Hammond, *Of Fundamentals;* McLaren, *Catholic Dogma*, pp. 48–51; Palmer, *The Church*, Pt. I. ch. v. A partial orthodoxy

of the faith transcend our ability to explore them fully, and we are therefore incompetent to determine their necessity merely on grounds of human reason. The fact that they have been revealed for our salvation makes a denial of their necessity to that end a repudiation of divine wisdom.

No doubt we are able to discern a difference in the *relative* importance or centrality of catholic dogmas. We can see, for instance, that the truth of the Incarnation occupies a more fundamental position in the faith at large than that of angelic ministrations. But this difference is not such as to make the former doctrine essential and the latter non-essential. In fact this distinction between essential and non-essential doctrine, as applied to the contents of the faith, is false and misleading.[1] We are under the most serious obligation to accept every truth as essential which we believe to be revealed by God.

The point can be illustrated by a comparison between moral obligations. We all recognize a difference in the relative importance of such obligations. It is more subversive of moral principles, for instance, to violate

is as absurd in the eyes of liberals as it is deplorable in the eyes of catholic theologians. See Sabatier, *Religions of Authority*, p. 260; Réville, *Liberal Christianity*, pp. 6 (note), 27. Réville says, "Now, as soon as the teaching of a religion is rejected at any single point in the name of reason, the authority of that religion becomes subordinate to the authority of reason."

[1] Palmer shows that it is also useless for purposes of argument or of procuring unity. Agreement as to the meaning and application of the phrase "fundamental" cannot be secured. *The Church*, Vol. I. pp. 122–131.

the law against murder than to disregard that against stealing. Yet no thoughtful person believes for a moment that it is not essential to righteousness to refrain from stealing or from any violation of moral principle whatsoever.[1] A reflecting Christian should be able to see that it is essential to his possession of a saving faith that he should accept with docile mind all the known contents of divine revelation; and that the fact of their having been revealed should be regarded as establishing their importance, whether this importance is perceptible on grounds of reason or not.

These considerations involve no specific conclusions touching the judgment and final destiny of those who, through no personal fault, are invincibly ignorant of revealed truths. The teaching of Holy Scripture and of the Church, as to the condemnation of those who refuse to hold the faith,[2] has reference plainly to such

[1] What is said in St. James ii. 10, 11 is relevant. "For whosoever shall keep the whole law [*i.e.* regard it as generally binding], and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For He that said, 'Do not commit adultery,' said also, 'Do not kill.' Now if thou commit no adultery, yet, if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law." The distinction between mortal and venial sin is valid. But it is a pernicious delusion that any sin, even though rightly termed venial, can be cherished obstinately without becoming mortal. William Law writes with convincing force on the duty of all Christians to aim at entire perfection in righteousness. *Serious Call*, opening chapters.

[2] The Scriptures teach unmistakably that salvation is contingent on the reception of Christ's teaching, quite apart from St. Mark xvi. 16, which is discounted by many as not in the original text. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned."

as are afforded opportunities that make them justly accountable for failing to come to a saving knowledge of its contents. The destiny of the invincibly ignorant is not defined in Scripture or by the Church.

The sum of the matter is that knowledge, or reasonable opportunity of knowledge, of divinely revealed truth brings with it an inevitable obligation to accept such truth, and a liability to eternal consequences for rejecting it. The only excuse for regarding a religious doctrine as non-essential is the possession of sufficient reasons for doubting seriously that it has been revealed; and one who acknowledges that the Church "hath authority in Controversies of Faith" ought also to grant that doubts based upon mere private judgment are not legitimate in his case, when they are opposed to the teaching of the Catholic Church.

§ 7. Doctrines ought to be received when imposed by sufficient ecclesiastical authority; and obligatory

The faith which is necessary for justification is undoubtedly more than mere intellectual belief; but it certainly includes implicit acceptance of all the teaching of Christ. It is the duty of all even to "*contend* for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints." St. Jude 3. Christians are to be jealous for the doctrine of Christ. St. John says, if any man come and "bring not this teaching, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:" 2 St. John 10; and whatever adjustment of this rule may be required by our changed conditions, it certainly is not fulfilled in its spirit if we receive open heretics into religious fellowship.

In brief, trifling with Christian doctrines is treated as wrong-doing in the New Testament. Cf. St. John iii. 18–20, 36; Acts xiii. 46 (and parallel passages); Rom. xvi. 17; 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4; 1 Tim. vi. 3–5, 20; 2 St. Pet. ii. 1, 2; etc.

doctrines may be classified according to the manner in which they are imposed.[1]

(*a*) First in rank are those dogmas which have been defined by the authority of the entire Catholic Church in a formal way as necessary to be held by all Christians. These dogmas ought to be held not only in substance but in the terms which the Catholic Church has unitedly employed to define them. The creeds and the decrees of faith adopted by the Ecumenical Councils alone have such authority.

(*b*) Definitions which have been adopted by all parts of the Church, acting separately, have ecumenical authority, if the meaning of the terms employed is the same everywhere, or, when different language is used, if there is an obvious and substantial agreement between the various separate definitions. The definitions which teach or imply that the consecrated eucharistic species are truly the Body and Blood of Christ afford an example. In such cases the common doctrine is binding upon all; but the terms employed are binding only in the local portions of the Church which impose them.

(*c*) Doctrines known to be held as of faith everywhere, always, and by the generality of catholic theologians, but not defined ecumenically, or in equivalent terms everywhere,[2] must be regarded as obliging the

[1] Such classifications are made by Field, *The Church*, Bk. III. ch. iv.; and Palmer, *The Church*, Vol. I. pp. 104–108.

[2] We should distinguish from these doctrines such opinions as are generally held, but not as articles of the faith. Cf. § 8 (*b*), below.

consciences of all. They demand explicit faith on the part of those who have become aware of their universal acceptance, although diversity of terminology is permissible when substantial agreement is preserved. The doctrine of man's primitive state is an example.

(*d*) The formal definitions of doctrine imposed by particular Churches, but not adopted universally, should control the explicit faith of those upon whom they are imposed, but do not have such authority in other particular Churches. It is assumed, of course, that these definitions are not known to contradict ecumenical teaching.

§ 8. Much liberty remains touching terms to be employed and opinions to be held. The Church has not defined all the contents of saving truth; and many questions arise which are not answered by divine revelation, and concerning which a difference of opinion is allowable.[1]

(*a*) The faithful have the right to refuse the use of particular terms, even when they may be shown to be useful to distinguish truth accurately from error, provided they have not been imposed by ecumenical authority or by their own particular Church. The fact remains, however, that terms which have stood the test of very widespread use, and have been found serviceable to an accurate maintenance of the faith,

[1] Speculative views are called "pious opinions," in relation to their consistency with the piety of loyal believers, and "*dubia*," in relation to their uncertainty and non-obligatory nature. Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. viii. §§ 4, 5.

ought not to be disparaged or put aside except for grave reasons. The thoughtful Christian will feel bound to use the most widely approved doctrinal language, not merely for his own safety, but also for the sake of unity, so that all may more obviously "speak the same thing." [1] But individual liberty and discretion may not be interfered with where the Church has not defined the language which must be accepted.[2]

(*b*) Opinions may prevail very generally in the Church without binding individuals to their acceptance, if they have neither been imposed by the Church as necessary to be believed, nor have been held in the Church as of faith everywhere, always and by the generality of catholic theologians. We must distinguish carefully between general opinions and ecumenical teaching. Only the latter may be insisted upon as *de fide*.[3]

(*c*) The same freedom to differ exists in relation to views which prevail peculiarly in one's own portion of the Church. Thus no Anglican view, however prevalent, can bind even an Anglican, unless it is clearly

[1] 1 Cor. i. 10.

[2] The term "Sacrament," in its application to other rites than Baptism and the Holy Eucharist, is an instance. The truths connoted by the Latin assertion of seven Sacraments, and the Greek maintenance of seven Mysteries, are, of course, not to be rejected.

[3] The patristic theory that our Lord paid a ransom for our souls to the devil, is often cited as a case in point. A more indisputable example is the ancient inference from the doctrine of the resurrection of our bodies, that the particles of matter contained in them at the hour of death will be gathered again in the resurrection. Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, p. 164, note.

and legitimately imposed upon him by proper ecclesiastical authority.[1]

(*d*) The views of theological schools or ecclesiastical parties are also lacking in authority over the individual conscience, whatever theological weight they may derive from the learning and spiritual gifts of those who maintain them. No one may be rightly regarded as heretical because of his agreement or disagreement with school opinions, provided he does not reject any portion of the catholic faith.[2]

(*e*) Finally, no binding authority attaches to private opinions, held by individual theologians, even when based upon arguments seemingly sufficient, unless they can be shown to be in reality the teaching of the Church.[3]

Two general remarks should be added. In the first place, in dealing with obligatory doctrines and non-obligatory opinions, we have defined their authority solely with reference to ecclesiastical teaching. This is consistent with the conviction, maintained elsewhere, that no doctrine may be imposed as *de fide* unless it can be proved out of Scripture. The Church is the practical *teacher* and *definer* of the faith; and therefore we identify what is *de fide* by the fact that she teaches it as necessary to be believed. But, for reasons elsewhere given, we assume throughout that what she teaches is contained in Holy Scripture.

[1] The opinion that no one will enjoy the beatific vision prior to the day of judgment is *ad rem.*

[2] The Scotist view, that the Incarnation would have occurred if man had not sinned, illustrates this.

[3] St. Anselm's theory of the Atonement is an instance.

Our second remark is this. No opinion which may at one time rightly be rejected in the Church can become by subsequent ecclesiastical action an article of faith. This does not mean that the Church may not impose new phrases in defining her faith, but simply this, that the substantial area of the faith may not be enlarged by the Church. Her dogmatic authority is confined to the sphere of teaching and defining a faith which was revealed to her in pentecostal days.[1]

[1] The belief in the immaculate conception of the Blessed Virgin was of mediæval origin. Its imposition as an article of faith by Pious IX. in 1854 was unlawful. This is accentuated by the fact that St. Thomas Aquinas, the greatest authority among theologians in the Roman schools, rejects the opinion. *Summa Theol.*, III. xxvii. 2.

CHAPTER IX

THE DEVELOPMENT OF DOCTRINE

I. *Legitimate Developments*

§ 1. Catholic doctrine never changes in its own substance, either by addition, by subtraction, or by modification. It was delivered once for all, and the dogmas by which certain of its contents are defined by the Church ever retain the official meaning with which they were imposed.[1] But credal definitions are limited in function. They are not framed for the purpose of exhibiting the manifold bearings and implications of the truths with which they are concerned, but in order to define these truths in their own content. Such definitions are necessary, if the primary veritics of religion are to be preserved from subversion; but they were not intended to hamper Christian thought, nor have they done so. On the contrary, they have afforded secure premises that at once stimulate the

[1] St. Jude 3. Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. vi. § 15, on the theory that the creeds should be interpreted progressively. The reader will remember that the word "interpret" has two distinct, although related, uses in this connection: (*a*) to exhibit the exact content and meaning of a creed, considered in itself; (*b*) to expound a creed in its implications and bearings. When it is said that the interpretation of a creed may not be altered, the word is used in the former sense.

thought of those who accept them and make their thinking true and fruitful.[1]

They stimulate thought because they are seen to define leading truths, truths that are central, that are related vitally to other domains of fact and experience, and that come to connote more and more as human experience widens. The consequence is that, as time goes by, Dogmatic Theology grows richer and more adequate, without ever exhausting the bearings and implications of what was originally revealed.

The development of doctrine is nothing else than this perpetual increase in the Church's realization and exhibition of the relations of revealed truth to other truth and to human experience. Revealed truth remains, in its own content and substance, precisely what it was when first delivered to the Church; but it is more adequately appropriated and more richly set forth in relation to successive forms of experience, thought, and language.[2]

[1] Cf. above, ch. iv. § 3 *fin.*

[2] Newman's treatise on *The Development of Christian Doctrine*, obviously open to adverse criticism as it is, has primary importance in modern literature on the subject. Mozley, *On Development;* Palmer, *Development and the Conscience;* and W. A. Butler, *Letters on Development;* are among the most important replies to Newman. Blenkinsopp, *Doctrine of Development*, is a continuation of Newman's line of thought, written twenty-five years later. Among other Anglican treatments of the subject should be mentioned Liddon, *Divinity of our Lord*, pp. 435–438, 448–450; *Ch. Hist. Soc. Lecs.*, 2d Series, pp. 83–86; Stanton, *Place of Authority*, pp. 128–138, 168–170; and Darwell Stone, *The Christian Church*, ch. xiv. Stone gives a good historical account of the subject.

Roman Catholic writers have taken opposite views. The reac-

That there is a legitimate development of doctrine was not left for moderns to discover. Its inevitableness was recognized by St. Vincent of Lerins and by other ancient writers,[1] and has been exemplified all along by a continual growth in the richness of Dogmatic Theology. But the late Cardinal Newman brought the fact into general consideration, and the Darwinian theory of evolution[2] has immensely strengthened the conviction that the bearing of credal propositions, and of Scripture itself, is never exhausted, but evolves into a more and more significant theology as the ages roll on. The hints that Newman threw out as an apology for accepting the authority of novel teaching from the

tionary position is formulated by Fr. Clarke, *Nineteenth Century*, Feb. 1900. Wilhelm and Scannell, *Manual*, Vol. I. § 35; Carson, *Reunion Essays*, I.; and Dom. Chapman, *Bishop Gore and the Cath. Claims*, pp. 26–36, follow in Newman's path. More radical and rationalistic positions have been advanced by Mivart, *Nineteenth Century*, and *Fortnightly Review*, Jan. 1900; and Loisy, *The Gospel and the Church, passim.*

[1] St. Vincent says, *Commonitorium*, ch. xxiii., concerning advancement of religion, "For who is either so envious of men, or hateful of God, who would labour to hinder that? But yet in such sort that it may be truly an increase in faith, but not a change; since this is the nature of an increase, that in themselves severally things grow greater; but of a change, that something be turned, from one thing which it was, to another which it was not. Fitting it is, therefore, that the understanding, knowledge, and wisdom, . . . as well of one alone, as of the whole Church in general, should by the advance of ages abundantly increase and go forward, but yet for all that, *only in its own kind and nature;* that is, in the same doctrine, in the same sense, in the same judgment." Cf. Augustine, *in Joan.*, Tr. xiv. c. 3. n. 5. cited by Liddon, *Divinity of our Lord*, pp. 435–438.

[2] Newman's *Development* appeared in 1845, Darwin's *Origin of the Species* in 1859.

Roman See are seen to have been misapplied by him; but his central thought, that articles of faith grow more practically significant with the development of spiritual experience, is now acknowledged by catholic and protestant alike.[1] We are not likely, therefore, to be in disagreement with the more thoughtful when we say that legitimate developments of doctrine may arise from (*a*) analytical consideration of the original propositions of the faith in the light of the Sacred Scriptures; (*b*) the necessity of framing new and enlarged definitions in order to answer the questions which heresies and novel forms of thought and language suggest; (*c*) the inevitable impulse to co-ordinate scientifically and apologetically the various departments of revealed truth both with each other and with increasing knowledge of the natural order; (*d*) the necessity of exhibiting the practical bearings of catholic doctrine on the multiplying problems which mutations and developments of civilization and increasing complexity of the Church's experience bring to the front.

§ 2. (*a*) It is our duty and privilege to meditate habitually and analytically upon revealed truth. And we are called upon to search the Scriptures, not only to examine whether these things are so,[2] but also to enrich our hold upon what we believe.[3]

Thus we hold together the truths of our Lord's very

[1] Cf. for some thoughtful and suggestive remarks on the law of the evolution of dogma in history, Orr, *Progress of Dogma*, pp. 20–32.

[2] Acts xvii. 11.

[3] Cf. St. Matt. xiii. 51, 52.

Godhead and of His complete Manhood. A full consideration of these truths brings to light a necessary implication contained in them, that our Lord possesses as His own all the attributes and operations of the divine and the human natures. A realization of this was quickened in the Church by conflict with heresy, and led to an ecumenical recognition and use of the *communicatio idiomatum*, or predication of divine and human attributes to our Lord's one Person under all His personal titles, and, in particular, of a twofold will and operation.[1] A study of Scripture serves to confirm and illustrate this developed doctrine. We are there assured that it was the divine Word who became flesh,[2] the Lord of glory who was crucified [3] and the Son of Man who was the Son of the Living God,[4] and the future Judge of mankind.[5]

[1] The third Ecumenical Council deduced from the verity of our Lord's Manhood and human birth, and from the truth that He is a divine Person, the consequence that God was born of the Blessed Virgin — that she is rightly called θεοτόκος, bearer of God. The sixth Council declared that as there are two perfect natures in Christ — the Godhead and the Manhood — He possesses two natural wills and operations in His one Person, the human will being always conformed to the divine.

[2] St. John i. 14.

[3] 1 Cor. ii. 8. Cf. Acts xx. 28: "The Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood." It should be noted, however, that some ancient manuscripts throw doubt on the correctness of the reading "of God."

[4] St. Matt. xvi. 13–16.

[5] St. Matt. xxv. 31, 32. On the *communicatio idiomatum* see a condensed but comprehensive note in Bright, *St. Leo on the Incarnation*, note 5, pp. 128–132.

In this and many other particulars, the Church and her theologians have grown in their realization of what is contained and implied in the original deposit of faith. And the faith has always contained, either explicitly or by demonstrable implication, whatever we can learn in this world with the certainty of faith concerning divine mysteries. But the Holy Spirit is ever guiding the Church more completely into the truth.[1] This does not mean that essentially new revelations are afforded, but that the Church is continually guided to discern new treasures which in reality have been contained in what she has held from pentecostal days.[2] As Westcott has shown, the meaning of Scripture, wherein the faith is embodied in manifold ways, can be ascertained more and more adequately as the ages roll by, and "the latest age has not exhausted the meaning of what was once said." [3] The bald contents of the Church's faith remain forever the same, but the ripeness of her mind grows continually.

§ 3. (*b*) The contents of the faith, as they are more fully realized and related to other things, come to be expressed in new and varied language, and in terms borrowed from other departments of thought. Each

[1] Cf. St. John xvi. 13. It is promised that the Spirit will "shew you the things that are to come" — perhaps this refers to the larger revelations which the apostles could not bear before the Resurrection had opened their eyes, or to the future bearings of the things of Christ which He was to shew them.

[2] St. Matt. xiii. 52: " . . . which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." Cf. Col. ii. 3.

[3] *Revelation of the Risen Lord*, p. 160.

age asks for expositions of Christian doctrine in terms which are suited to its own understanding. Forms of thought, and the use of words, continually change; and, if the nature of the faith is rightly to be understood, its ancient terms must be translated again and again into the language of current speech.[1]

The exigencies of controversy are so many occasions of development in doctrinal terminology. Erroneous explications of the faith appear continually, and have to be met by fresh statements, the terms of which guard the faith in each case from some new perversion of it. When the circumstances so require and permit, these new definitions are sanctioned by ecclesiastical authority, and become tests of orthodoxy — *i.e.* of faithfulness to the ancient doctrines of the Church.[2]

Moreover, the Church is confronted in each age by new forms of philosophy and unbelief, and her theologians are compelled to frame new apologies in which the terminology of current science and philosophy is taken into account and employed in the interests of

[1] To translate does not, however, mean either alteration or displacement of the original. Credal terms, for instance, retain their full force and authority, although made intelligible to each age by theological explications suited to the time.

[2] The first Nicene Council sanctioned a term, ὁμοούσιος, that had been rejected in the previous century by the important Council of Antioch because of its misleading use. The term needed to be cleared of heretical implications, and its adoption in the third century would have been *premature*. But once crystallized in the Nicene sense, its use represented a legitimate development of doctrinal language.

revealed truth.[1] The result is that new terms are taken into theology and are employed in exact definition of saving truth. These terms are often metaphysical in origin. It does not follow, however, that the faith is converted into, or identified with, philosophy. What happens is that metaphysical terms are appropriated to new uses, and come to signify technically and theologically the immutable truths of catholic theology.[2]

§ 4. (*c*) The human mind has an instinctive tendency to co-ordinate the contents of knowledge, and to consider the relations that connect particular truths. This tendency is legitimate,[3] and exercises a great influence upon theological thought and language. Theology tends to become more and more scientific as the ages roll on; and the reasonableness of revealed truths is made increasingly apparent to thoughtful men by a fuller exhibition of their coherence with each other and with all departments of truth.[4] Thus the Church at an early period began the task of formulating the truths of divine unity and threefold personality in connection with each other. And each new transition of

[1] The present tendency to translate Christian doctrines into the terms of personality illustrates this. How far it is being kept within safe limits will appear more clearly in another generation. Not all the truths of Christianity can be defined thus without perversion. They all have personal *bearing*, however. And to exhibit such bearing cannot but enrich catholic theology.

[2] The phrase "real presence" illustrates this.

[3] It is a necessary branch of effort to assimilate truth and fact more intelligently.

[4] Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. i. Pt. VI., on the relations of theology to other sciences.

thought has seen the co-ordination of other truths and the fuller development of systematic theology. This development never ceases, and new departments of revealed truth are co-ordinated and brought into scientific adjustment as the progress of theology permits this to be done. The ancient fathers achieved this work chiefly in the sphere of Theology Proper and the Incarnation. Later on the truths of anthropology and of divine grace were dealt with,[1] and the theologians of our own age are giving other subjects the same scientific treatment. There is necessarily a limit to this development. Divine truth is but partially revealed, although what is revealed is in a real sense an outline of all truth; and no final system of doctrine is possible. Scientific theology must grow continually, and must ever be subject to correction by the reassertion of the particulars of divine revelation in their original integrity. It may not change or minimize any article of the faith in the interests of logical completeness and intelligibility.

§ 5. (*d*) Finally, the practical bearing and larger significance of the faith are brought to light more adequately, as the result of application of its truths to the guidance of life. The principle that one must live the true life in order to know the true doctrine of

[1] The fact that this last and subsequent developments have been in a great measure confined to the Western Church deprives them of the ecumenical rank and finality that belongs to the developments which were registered by the Ecumenical Councils. Augustinian theology, valuable as it is, is provincial, at least so far as it is distinctive. Allen's *Continuity of Christian Thought*, however, exaggerates the contrast between Augustinian and Eastern theology.

Christ[1] involves, as its inevitable consequence, that the truths of revelation will be increasingly appreciated and understood in proportion to the variety of practical problems to which they are applied successfully. With the progress of human civilization — a progress which has been enormously facilitated by the publication of the Gospel — the richness of life increases. Thus the truths of catholic teaching come more and more abundantly into practical application, and are found to afford the truest solution of difficulties in every walk of life.[2] The science of moral theology goes on developing through all time, and its development means richer understanding of the faith. For example, amid all the crudities which gain currency in popular exposition, the truths of divine Fatherhood and human brotherhood are coming to be better understood in the Church as well as in the world. It remains, however, that the richer mind of the modern Church touching these truths consists simply of a fuller practical realization of what was maintained by the ancient Church.[3]

[1] "If any man wills to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God, or whether I speak from Myself." St. John vii. 17. Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. ix. Pt. I., on the practical aspects of Dogmatic Theology.

[2] Not an immediate or formal solution, but a point of view which alone makes a practical solution possible. Catholic doctrine sets forth the correct and probationary meaning of life's difficulties; and points to the way in which peace must come between the different classes of society, if at all. The love which dogma guards is the ultimate *sine qua non* of the successful working of any sociological scheme whatsoever.

[3] Temple's *Bampton Lectures* gives some thoughtful remarks on the development of doctrine by practical application to new problems.

II. *Illegitimate Developments*

§ 6. The limits of legitimate developments of doctrine are often exceeded, and we need carefully to distinguish between developments which are sound and those which are unsound and illegitimate.

§ 7. (*a*) Developments which have the result of enlarging the area of doctrine imposed as necessary to be believed are obviously illegitimate. By enlarging the area of doctrine is not meant the mere articulation of its original contents or implications, or an increase of explicit definitions of what has been implicitly contained in the faith from the beginning, but the imposition of doctrines the premises of which are drawn from speculative sources lying outside the demonstrable contents of divine revelation, and not provable by Holy Scripture.

The point may be made more clear, perhaps, if we distinguish between conclusions which are the result of deduction and those which arise from induction. In deduction the conclusion is really contained in the premises of argument, and constitutes what may be called an analytical judgment — one which adds nothing new to the data previously known, but merely expresses what is implicit in them in an explicit form.[1] Thus, when we reason from premises already acknowledged, that "all men are rational," and that "all

[1] The distinction between analytical and synthetical judgments was made by Kant. It is expounded in Baldwin, *Dic. of Philos.*, *s. v.* "Analytic and Synthetic Judgment." We have applied the distinction somewhat differently.

Americans are men," to the conclusion that "all Americans are rational," our conclusion merely brings to articulate and separate expression what is demonstrably contained in the premises. So again, when we deduce the truth of a real presence of our Lord's Body and Blood in the Eucharistic Sacrament from the divine revelation that the consecrated species are His Body and Blood,[1] we add nothing in the conclusion to what is really latent in the divinely revealed premise; for whatever is rightly identified with a concrete object is really present with it. Accordingly the doctrine of the real presence is not an enlargement of the area of the original revelation.

On the other hand, to use the contents of revelation as the basis of induction, and then to treat the results of such induction as necessary to be believed, is to enlarge the area of the original faith revealed to the Church. Induction starts with particulars and rises by a process of speculative generalization to hypotheses which are not fully contained within the premises. In defining the law of gravitation, for instance, Newton hypothecated a wider area of fact than had been really ascertained or proved. His hypothesis was merely a

[1] This revelation was made by our Lord partly at Capernaum, St. John vi. 51-58; and partly in the night of His betrayal, St. Matt. xxvi. 26–28; St. Mark xiv. 22–24; St. Luke xxii. 19–20. It was confirmed by St. Paul, 1 Cor. xi. 23–27. Every word of these scriptural passages has been the subject of close criticism and controversy. Their interpretation, however, affords a very important instance of the necessity of having regard for the Church's ecumenical judgment, perfectly clear in this case, as to the doctrinal teaching of Holy Scripture.

hypothesis, and was not wholly contained within existing experience, nor is it thus contained now. It constituted what we may call a synthetical judgment — one which predicated more than the subject-matter had been ascertained to contain. Again, divine revelation assures us that to reject the Gospel — wittingly, of course, for unwitting rejection is a contradiction in terms — involves forfeiture of the kingdom of heaven.[1] Individual writers have made an induction from this particular, and have reached the conclusion that no human being can ever enter the kingdom of heaven unless he has accepted the Gospel in this life. It is quite unnecessary at this point to discuss the speculative value of such a conclusion. We maintain, however, that the conclusion referred to is larger in content than the revelation from which it is inferred. It is a hypothesis, a synthetical judgment, and asserts more than the premise contains. The premise asserts certain consequences to those who *reject* the Gospel, whereas the conclusion subjects all who *miss the knowledge* of the Gospel to these consequences. Such a conclusion must remain to the end a speculative opinion merely. To make it a part of Christian doctrine is an example of illegitimate development. This is true of all speculative opinions whatsoever—*i.e.* opinions which hypothecate more than is demonstrably contained in the revealed faith of the Church.

Much is said in favour of a larger faith. If this means a richer realization of the ancient faith without

[1] Cf. above, pp. 271, 272, and note 2 *in loc.*

subversion of its ancient meaning, it is to be welcomed. But if it means, as is frequently the case, substantial accretion to necessary doctrine along the lines of induction and synthetical judgment, such a faith affords an instance of illegitimate development. If it means a more elastic faith — one which is less insistent upon faithful maintenance of the original deposit of truth committed to the Church, — such a faith in reality signifies carelessness touching the truths of salvation, and also represents an illegitimate development. If it means a hopeful attitude of mind towards the future, and in relation to matters not revealed to us, surely such a faith is to be welcomed, provided it does not conflict with or prejudice the revealed certainties of the Church's faith.

What we have said is not intended to throw discredit on the use of inductive speculation in divine things. Such speculation, when kept within its proper use, is scientific and valuable. We have already shown that it can be employed fruitfully in considering the manifold data of theology contained in Holy Scripture.[1] The Scriptures exhibit a spiritual world, dominated and controlled at each stage of its manifestation by an increasing fulness of divine truth and power. Its phenomena reveal a supernatural order, and obey the laws of the kingdom of God, much as the phenomena of the natural order obey natural laws. The inductive method is applicable in each case — in the one to verify and illustrate a revealed faith, in the other to do the

[1] Ch. vii. § 9.

same in relation to the hypotheses and dogmas of natural science.

It is to be acknowledged that scriptural inductions, and the synthetical judgments or theological hypotheses based upon them, are not limited to the area of necessary and saving doctrine. But it should be added that these wider inductions have neither more nor less security than scientific expertness in spiritual things can give them. They are valuable for the development of scientific theology, but nothing can be treated by such theology as *de fide* which the Spirit-guided Catholic Church has not perceived to be revealed as necessary to be believed for salvation. The Church teaches, and so far as necessary defines, essential doctrine; and the Scriptures confirm and illustrate her teaching, by exhibiting manifold facts, prophecies, dramas, types, etc., in which it is imbedded.

The Scriptures not only afford data for theological inductions, but they also limit and correct doctrinal developments. New definitions and propositions must accord with relevant facts and revelations, and these facts and revelations are contained in the Scriptures. The guidance of the Spirit guarantees that catholic doctrines will thus accord with the Scriptures. But the importance of a fresh study of Scripture in each age is very great. What would otherwise crystallize into lifeless and abstract *formulæ* is thus contemplated in manifold practical connections, and is perceived to be a light to guide us along the pathway of life. To conclude this section, no developments of doctrine can

be accepted that disagree with Holy Scripture and cannot be verified thereby.[1]

§ 8. (*b*) It is illegitimate, and materially fallacious, to develop a theological system which is based upon fragmentary portions of the faith. It means a use of inadequate premises, and is the ordinary cause of heresies. The heretic begins by emphasizing some favourite truth, neglecting other and related truths that should govern the manner of our holding and emphasizing it.[2] The truth thus removed from its interpretive setting assumes the form of caricature, and the inferences which are drawn from it are one-sided, and lead their maintainers on to a denial of what at first was merely neglected. Thus the area of the faith is narrowed.

Arius began with an exclusive emphasis upon the truth that Christ is Son, neglecting the counter truth that He is divine, and therefore co-equal and co-eternal with the Father. He proceeded to infer that, as Son, Christ must be later in time than His Father, which would be true if He had been a human Son merely, which He was not. If later in time than the Father, Arius reasoned, there must have been a time when He was not. This led on to the further conclusion that He was a creature, and mutable. Thus Arius came to a denial of our Lord's co-essential Godhead.

[1] The fresh study of Scripture is the most important of several lines of critical scholarship concerned with the purging of ecclesiastical traditions from non-primitive accretions. On this see ch. iv. § 15.

[2] Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. vi. § 19, on the partisan, heretical, and reactionary tempers.

One who remembers that divine sonship is eternal, and involves an eternal generation, is not likely to repeat the mistake of Arius.[1]

§ 9. (*c*) Unregulated attempts to attain to logical completeness in doctrinal conceptions frequently cause illegitimate developments, and are apt to weaken men's hold upon particulars of the faith. It is often forgotten that, although the faith is in a real sense organic, so that its truths are vitally related to each other, our knowledge of these truths cannot, in this world, become sufficiently exhaustive for us to be able to formulate a completely rounded system of doctrine that will have permanent scientific validity. We can indeed detect many of the relations which connect the articles of our faith. If it were not so, there could be no science of theology — no rational co-ordination of revealed truths. But many gaps remain, and beyond certain sure teachings of divine revelation, and their immediate implications, we cannot define with finality the relations which bind truth to truth, and which, if fully known, would make possible a final and logically symmetrical formulation of divine truth as a whole. Truths but partially understood may indeed be held together in certain obvious connections with each other; but a more exhaustive knowledge of them is required than we can now acquire before we can fully explain these connections and solve the seeming oppositions with which our partial apprehension is concerned.

[1] See Newman, *Arians*, ch. ii. § v. Cf. Mozley, *Theory of Development*, pp. 41–44.

The final harmony of such truths, for instance, as divine immutability and sovereignty on the one hand, and human freedom and contingency, on the other, is to be believed in rather than understood and explained. The attempt to explain — to solve problems now insoluble — is certain to result in a sacrifice of one truth, or group of truths, in the interests of another. The whole course of Christological error illustrates this, the Godhead and the Manhood suffering obscuration by turns, because of futile efforts to "solve the problem" of their union in one Person. The conclusion of the matter is that we must place opposing truths which we cannot harmonize in simple juxtaposition, lest by separately and one-sidedly emphasizing one we somehow weaken our hold upon the other. This is peculiarly necessary when we undertake to make deductions from either.[1]

§ 10. (*d*) Unless divine revelation is false, or the teaching of Church and Scripture as to its contents untrustworthy, it is an illegitimate line of development to modify the faith in order to harmonize its propositions with the physical and historical conclusions of natural science. It is illegitimate for several reasons.

In the first place, in the nature of things, no possible conclusions in the physical and historical order can

[1] In deprecating such placing in juxtaposition of the divine and human attributes of Christ, certain English theologians, who believe with all their hearts in the veritable Godhead of our Lord, are making it harder for those who are less deeply grounded in traditional doctrine to retain that belief. The readiness to hold *together* truths which baffle our attempts to reconcile, but which are

militate against the contents of catholic doctrine, unless, — as is altogether incredible — historical criticism disproves those facts of the Gospel narrative which constitute the primary content and basis of our faith. The faith helps us to appreciate the divine significance of natural events and laws; and a knowledge of these in turn is of the greatest value in a theological exhibition of the faith in its larger bearings. But the facts and certainties of nature and human history cannot be prejudiced by the contents of supernatural revelation, except on the extra-scientific and false supposition that the supernatural cannot manifest itself within the natural order.[1]

Another reason, somewhat connected with the above, is that we have abundant grounds for accepting the truth of catholic doctrine, and truth cannot really be contradicted by truth. We must not confound oppositions that appear insoluble to our reason with contradictions that can be seen to be such, and which therefore require the abandonment of one or other of the conflicting propositions. Thoughtful people can

severally contained in divine revelation, is an important characteristic of the docile and catholic temper. Cf. the writer's *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. vi. Pt. III., and *Kenotic Theory*, pp. 83–85.

[1] The supernatural is considered in *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. ii. It is to be observed that the presence in scriptural narratives of statements of fact which lie outside the sphere of saving truth does not make them to be articles of faith; nor may they be made such by *a priori* notions of the consequences of biblical inspiration. It follows that alleged contradictions beteween the scriptural narratives referred to and modern science, whether correct or not, leave the contents of the catholic faith untouched. Cf. ch. vii. §§ 5, 6, above.

see the difference. They can see, for instance, that two and two cannot equal five in any sphere, and at the same time can realize that the two propositions which affirm three divine Persons and one only divine Being are not demonstrably contradictory, however much they transcend our power to rationalize. If the conclusions of natural and historical scientists seem to us to contradict the contents of revealed teaching, we are either confusing an opposition that is due to our mental limitations with real contradiction, or mistaking what is to be asserted in one or other of the two spheres of knowledge compared.

We may err as to what is really established in the sphere of natural investigation, and be over hasty in accepting hypotheses which, with fuller knowledge and riper thinking, will have to be modified, or even abandoned. On the other hand, we may be defending as *de fide* what is merely a speculative inference of theologians, based on earlier but mistaken physical or historical hypotheses. Thus, when theologians thought that the Copernican view of heavenly orbits was contrary to Christian doctrine, they were mistakenly identifying earlier astronomical science, to which biblical criticism and apologetical theology had adjusted itself, with revealed doctrine. The opposition lay in reality between antiquated astronomy which theologians had not outgrown and a more modern astronomy.[1]

[1] Herbert Spencer says, *First Principles*, ch. i. § 6, "And if both [religion and natural science] have bases in the reality of things, then between them there must be fundamental harmony. It is

We have need to distinguish carefully between the facts discovered by natural scientists and their hypotheses, which for the present may work within the sphere of application to which they are put, but which may have to be given up or amended when applied to wider areas of relevant fact. Theologians need to be acquainted in a general way with the progress of natural science, for valuable data are thus acquired for theological interpretation and apologetical consideration. But the greatest care should be taken lest by committing ourselves too absolutely to current hypotheses we bequeath theological inferences to our successors that will cause renewed conflict between theological and physical scientists. We should also be careful not to treat the Scriptures as if they were intended to anticipate the discoveries of natural investigators. This has been a fruitful cause of unnecessary controversy.[1]

Every advance in theoretical knowledge, practical experience, and human thought can, and ought to, be enlisted in the splendid work of making theology what it should be — a luminous and rational exposition of the divine in relation to the varied content of the universe, and its development towards the goal ordained for it. A theology that does not grow richer and more rational in its appeal to intelligent children of God is

impossible that there should be two orders of truth in absolute and everlasting opposition. . . . Each side, therefore, has to recognize the claims of the other as representing truths which are not to be ignored." Unfortunately he goes on to reduce the content of knowledge in both spheres almost to nothing by his agnostic philosophy.

[1] Cf. ch. vii. §§ 5, 6, above.

dead while it seems to live — a mummy that lasts on, but is forsaken by its living spirit.

§ 11. The development of doctrine requires on the part of theologians abundant and fresh study of Holy Scripture in every generation; openness of mind to all new scientific knowledge that can be employed either to illustrate divine operations or to convery in intelligible terms the contents of supernatural revelation; careful study of the forms of thought and language which are developed by philosophers, in order that they may be enlisted in a more precise exhibition of theological truth; and a correct and appreciative understanding of the practical conditions, sociological problems, and ideals of the times, in order to be able effectively to teach living men in fundamental truth.[1] No one theologian, indeed, can become an expert in all these spheres of investigation, but he can and ought in a general way to keep abreast of the increasing knowledge and practical developments of his age.

§ 12. The development of doctrine brings into play a fruitful combination of dependence upon authority and exercise of reason. In legitimate development neither are disregarded, but both concur in the common purpose of making divine truth victorious and practically valuable. Authority is false when it is not a means of publishing truth; while the primary function of reason is to assimilate truth and make it prevail practically. The development of doctrine is to be tested primarily, therefore, by its success in combining

[1] Cf. *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. iii. §§ 11–16, on theological sources.

a deference to trustworthy authority, as supplementary to the teaching of experience, with a spiritually assisted use of sound reason.

To speak specifically, the tests of a doctrinal development are fundamentally three: (*a*) It must proceed from truths that have been held to be essential parts of divine revelation everywhere in the Catholic Church, always, and by the generality of representative catholic theologians, and are contained in the Sacred Scriptures; (*b*) its premises must be sufficient, as well as catholic and scriptural; (*c*) its logic must be convincing and free from fallacy. If these conditions are adequately fulfilled, the result is necessarily sound and legitimate.[1]

It is, of course, to be remembered that an adequate logic is neither exclusively intellectual, nor purely natural; but enlists every faculty of the soul in proportionate and harmonious exercise, accepts credible authority, does justice to all pertinent facts and conditions, and is made secure and fruitful by sanctifying grace and the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the Body of Christ.

[1] Newman gives seven tests in his treatise on *Development*, ch. v. They are of uneven value, and were misapplied in some particulars by him. But they are in themselves sound and worth considering. He says that a true development must show the notes of (*a*) preservation of type, or of the doctrine from which it proceeds; (*b*) continuity of principles; (*c*) power of assimilating legitimate thought to itself; (*d*) logical sequence; (*e*) anticipation of later stages in the implicates of earlier Christian thought; (*f*) conservative action of later developments on earlier teaching; (*g*) chronic vigour, or ability to hold its own in living thought and under changed intellectual conditions.

THE END

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